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424

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

AFFAIRS

OF

ASIATIC TURKEY.

[In continuation of Confidential Paper No. 9050.]

213

July to December 1907.

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ERRATA.

Page 83, No. 65, line 2. For "No. 86 of the 23rd instant" read "3rd instant."
Page 185, No. 131, lines 1 and 2. For "November 8" and "November 2" respectively read "November 18" and "November 12."
Page 207, line 17. For "141" read "148."

[This despatch should have appeared in previous correspondence, January to June 1907 (Confidential Paper No. 9050), as No. 64*, on p. 86.]

[16416] No. 64*.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received May 21.)

(No. 289.)

Sir, *Constantinople, May 15, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Bussorah respecting events in Central Arabia. The news of Bin Saoud's defeat, if true, is important, especially if it is the issue of fighting on a large scale, such as was anticipated in the second of the reports from Mr. Consul Devey, inclosed in my despatch No. 257 of the 30th ultimo.

It seems to me to show the impolicy of intervention on the part of His Majesty's Government in the entanglements of internal conflicts between the Arab tribes, and to confirm the view as to the prudence of abstention, which I expressed in my despatch No. 198, Confidential, of the 1st ultimo.

The influence of His Majesty's Government should, however, I think, be exercised on Sheikh Mubarek to prevent his undertaking military operations, save in self-defence.

If we do not show our displeasure at aggressive action on his part he may presume on our support, and I venture again to repeat that I am by no means sure that if Pertev Pasha, the Chief of Staff of the 6th Army Corps, who has now been ordered to Bussorah to restore order there, were to organize a punitive expedition against Mubarek, he would not be successful.

The result would produce a very complicated situation, in which we might be called upon to intervene.

I never felt assured that any overtures made to Bin Saoud, whether through Mubarek or otherwise, would not be revealed to the Turkish Government, and the fact that he is now sending a messenger to Constantinople makes me think that His Majesty's Government were well advised in discountenancing any project of that kind.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 64*.

Consul Crow to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 31.)

Sir, *Bussorah, April 17, 1907.*

I HAVE received the following information from the Political Agent at Koweit regarding events in Central Arabia.

Mohamed-bin-Ithnain, Sheikh of the Sbi'a tribe, broke off his alliance with Bin Saoud, because the latter had killed two of his followers for intriguing, and sought refuge with Sheikh Mubarek of Koweit on the 6th March last. He was kindly received, but advised to return to his own country. Bin Saoud is said to have tried to raid the Shammars, but the latter collected in force, and Bin Saoud retreated to Boreyda.

By order of the Sheikh of Koweit, heavy dues are levied on the Haj caravan from Koweit to Mecca, £ T. 5 on each woman's litter and £ T. 1 on each camel rider. 16 rupees per head were levied on 114 slaves brought from Mecca to Koweit by the Haj caravan. Customs duties are being raised all round.

The Sheikh of Koweit is preparing to raid the Ajman tribe of Bedouins for stealing twenty herds from Koweit Bedouins in February last. About 2,000 townsmen, exclusive of Bedouins, have been enlisted, and all the Haj camels and their furniture, as well as a cargo of arms which lately arrived, have been commandeered by the Sheikh of Koweit for the foray. The Umtair and Thaffer Bedouins

are assisting Sheikh Mubarek in the business, and the latter is forming his camp at Sirra.

The news received at Bussorah regarding Nejd events is meagre. Izzet Pasha, late Commandant at Bussorah, received permission to proceed to Constantinople with two followers of Bin Saoud, named Salih-ul-Addil, former Sheikh of Rass, who was a partisan of Bin Reshid, and came over to Bin Saoud's side after the former's death, and Ibrahim-el-Damer. These two gentlemen, who proceed to Constantinople to do homage to the Sultan on behalf of Bin Saoud, left by the "Burhanieh" for Bagdad on the 10th April. They received from the Turkish Government £ T. 150 for journey expenses and an outfit allowance of £ T. 5, and are each accompanied by a scribe and a servant.

On the 13th April a letter reached the Vilayet of Bussorah to the effect that Sultan El Hamoud had fought with the Arabs of Bin Saoud near Kasin, and killed many of them. It is said that Bin Saoud alone escaped. I am not yet in possession of details of the engagement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. E. CROW.

Printed for the use of the Foreign Office. April 1908.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Asiatic Turkey.

[In continuation of Confidential Paper No. 9050.]

[21508] No. 1.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 371.)

Sir, *Therapia, June* 20, 1907.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 74 of the 15th and your reply of the 17th instant, I have the honour to report that, after consulting with the Grand Vizier, I communicated to the Sultan through Mr. Lamb and His Majesty's First Secretary, Tahsin Pasha, the information which I had received from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Hodeida respecting the seizure of the telegraph office at Sanaa by mutinous officers, giving as my ground for doing so the belief that it was in the Sultan's interest that he should be informed of any news that might directly affect the critical situation in the Yemen.

The First Secretary was not able immediately to see the Sultan, and I have had no message from His Majesty since my communication.

I tried to find out from the Grand Vizier whether negotiations had begun between the Palace and the deputation of Sheikhs from the Yemen, to which I referred in my despatch No. 325 of the 3rd instant as having been summoned to Constantinople. His Highness gave me to understand that the matter was outside his sphere, and that he indeed knew nothing beyond the mere fact of the arrival of the Sheikhs on the 14th and their presence at the Selamlik on the 17th. I cannot, however, asseverate the truth of His Highness' language.

From a secret quarter I learn that the Imam's Mission has presented to the Sultan through an influential Sheikh deputed to negotiate for them, who is probably Abdoul Huda, the following conditions:—

1. The Imam requires that the Yemen shall be managed by himself, and a certain number of Sheikhs nominated by him, the Government to have the right to appoint a certain number of civil inspectors for control, who are to be honest and just.

2. The Imam engages to supply during a holy war ("Djehad") 100,000 soldiers fully armed at his expense.

3. The Turkish Government to pay £T. 8,000 for damage done by English and Italian sailors to the Zambouks belonging to the Imam's followers.

4. His Majesty's Government have already offered their assistance and protection to the Imam, but he cannot accept this from "Nasranis" (Christians), and requires that the Turkish Government shall send a fleet to defend the Arabian coast so as to prevent altogether relations between Arabs and foreigners.

5. The taxation of the population to be in the hands of the Imam, who, however, would pay a yearly tribute (to be arranged) to the Turkish Government.

I am inclined to think this report of what has taken place so far fairly accurate, and the fact that the fourth condition is so absolutely the opposite of what really took

place in the autumn of 1905, when the Imam made overtures to His Majesty the King, to which no answer was returned, does not in any way affect my belief, since the conditions might be prompted as well by Arab duplicity as by the fear that the Imam's proposals had leaked out and were not unknown to the Turks.

If the question be referred to the Council of Ministers, as is probable, I believe the Grand Vizier and his colleagues will advocate, as far as they think they can do so without going athwart the Sultan's personal feelings, the granting of some form of administrative independence which will check, at all events, for a time, the ruinous drain of soldiers and funds required for the Yemen. They are certain, however, to avoid the expression "autonomy," which is with good reason hateful to the Sultan, and should I have any direct communication with His Majesty on the subject, I shall use the words "administrative freedom," or some similar phrase, rather than "autonomy."

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[21757] No. 2.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 377.)
Sir, *Constantinople, June 24, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith the figures of telegrams which I sent on the 14th and 23rd instant to Captain Dickson, His Majesty's Consul for the Van Vilayet, at Bitlis.

I have, &c.
(For the Ambassador),
(Signed) J. A. C. TILLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 2.

Sir N. O'Conor to Captain Dickson.

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June 14, 1907.*

MY Russian colleague is anxious that you should support the representations of his Consul respecting Sivas affairs.

I hope you will confer freely with him, and act together as far as possible.

If the Vali objects to your interference, you can inform him that you have come to Bitlis on special mission, in consequence of complaints made against him and the cruelties of certain officials.

I am communicating the substance of dragoman's Report to the Porte, and pressing for an inquiry into the alleged barbarity of conduct of the Tchaoush Reshid.

Inclosure 2 in No. 2.

Sir N. O'Conor to Captain Dickson.

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June 23, 1907.*

YOUR telegram of the 14th instant.

Russian Consul has reported pillage of Sodok and other villages, and massacre of inhabitants in Moush plain.

If reports be confirmed, you should do all in your power to stop further outrages and to prevent troops attacking defenceless villages.

Please report specially on attitude of Vali.

[21516] No. 3.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 380.)
Sir, *Therapia, June 24, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to report that I have received a number of Petitions lately in view of the approaching election of a Governor for the Lebanon, some in favour of the continuance in office of Mozaffer Pasha, and deprecating the choice of any member of the Franco family, and others against Mozaffer Pasha.

The members of the Franco family chiefly mentioned are Naoum Pasha, a former Governor, now Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and a man of high character, his brother-in-law, Youssouf Bey Coussa, and Fathi Bey Franco.

They are about equally numerous from each side, and are mostly, I believe, sent by persons expecting to derive personal advantage from a change of régime or from its maintenance.

In any case, it is very improbable that the appointment of Mozaffer Pasha will be renewed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[21526] No. 4.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 390.)
Sir, *Therapia, June 25, 1907.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 377 of the 24th instant, I have the honour to report that my Russian colleague read to me some three days ago a telegram from his Consul at Bitlis reporting that an important engagement had taken place between the Government troops and Armenian revolutionaries, in which 106 of the former had been killed; further, that there had been a serious incident at Sollouk, and that a considerable number of Armenians had been massacred in the plain of Moush.

We agreed to make earnest representations to the Grand Vizier upon the situation in those parts of Asia Minor, and when calling upon his Highness yesterday I told him the substance of what I had heard from the Russian Ambassador, and pointed out that were the news of a massacre of Christians in the Moush plains confirmed it would produce a most lamentable effect in Europe.

His Highness replied that the reports of the condition of affairs in Armenia which had been received in certain quarters were very much exaggerated, and he proceeded to give me the following account of what had taken place.

There had, he said, recently been three incidents in those regions, but there had been nothing in the nature of a massacre, and measures had been taken which would prevent anything of the sort occurring.

The first incident was the encounter between the troops and the revolutionary band under the leader Kievork. The troops had first come upon this band about eighteen days ago, in a village whose name his Highness did not mention, but they had failed to come to close quarters with the revolutionaries. Four days later they succeeded in surrounding the band in the village of Sollouk, situated about 10 miles to the north of Moush, and in the encounter which followed some eight of the revolutionaries were killed, including one who had been positively identified as the leader Kievork himself, while an officer and several men had fallen on the side of the troops. No massacre or pillage, his Highness declared, had taken place on this occasion, although he admitted that a couple of shops had been pillaged a little later in the town of Moush in the course of a disturbance which had arisen in consequence of the action of some discontented troops, who had collected in a mosque as a demonstration against the civil authorities for non-payment of salaries and other grievances.

The second incident also arose out of dissatisfaction with the local authorities. The population of Bitlis had made a violent demonstration at the residence of the Vali, who, together with an officer of gendarmerie, had been wounded, while a minor official had been killed. His Highness added that, in the matter of dissatisfaction with the Vali, the Mussulman and Christian elements of the population were in complete agreement, while the latter were equally dissatisfied with their Bishop, for whose recall they were pressing.

The Sultan had decided on sending a Commission to inquire into the causes of this dissatisfaction, and had ordered Tahir Pasha, a former Vali of Van, and recently appointed Governor of Trebizond, to proceed to Bitlis to conduct the inquiry.

The third incident was an encounter with Armenian revolutionaries in the Varak hills, to the south-west of Van, which had been without decisive result.

I strongly urged the Grand Vizier to impress upon the authorities engaged in the pursuit of revolutionary bands the necessity of distinguishing between the innocent and the guilty, in order that the inoffensive villages should not, as too often happened, be made to suffer in place of the "Fedai" revolutionists who succeeded in making good their escape. His Highness declared that the instructions which he had already sent were clearly in that sense, but that he would repeat them in even more precise terms, so that there might be no loophole for a misunderstanding.

On the 15th and 17th instant instant I received telegraphic information from His Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum reporting the substance of messages which he had received from the dragoman in charge of His Majesty's Vice-Consulate at Bitlis in regard to the incident in the Moush plain. Mr. Safrastian's reports made no mention of any massacre or pillage, and merely stated that fighting had occurred between the troops and Kievork's band, in which both sides had suffered losses. On the 25th instant I received a telegram from Mr. Shipley, giving Mr. Safrastian's version of the second incident mentioned by the Grand Vizier in the conversation recorded above. It appears that a serious rising took place at Bitlis on the 22nd instant, in the course of which the Vali's house was attacked and completely plundered by the mob, and a Commissary of Police and a Mussulman were killed. The Vali was wounded, and had to seek protection in the military barracks. The crowd seized the telegraph office, and the business in the bazaar was suspended. In other respects the town is quiet, and the soldiers have maintained order. A later telegram from Bitlis stated that the telegraph office was still in the hands of the mob, and that there were very few troops at that moment in the town.

Mr. Safrastian does not in any of his messages to His Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum express any anxiety for the safety of the Christian population.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[21528] No. 5.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 1.)

(No. 392.)

Sir, *Constantinople, June 25, 1907.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 371 of the 20th instant, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Hodeidah respecting Yemen affairs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 5.

Vice-Consul Richardson to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 26.)

Sir, *Hodeidah, May 30, 1907.*

THE transport "Smyrna," whose arrival with the members of the Imperial Yemen Commission was reported in my despatch No. 13 of the 27th April last, sailed again yesterday for Constantinople, taking back the above Commission.

She also conveyed Mahmoud Nedim Bey, ex-Adjoint of the Vali, and forty-four Arabs, selected by the Commission as representatives of the principal tribes in this province, and who are now proceeding to Constantinople.

At the instance of the Commission an Imperial Iradé was promulgated three or four weeks ago, inviting the Yemen inhabitants to select and dispatch to Constantinople their chief men and Sheikhs, with the view to place their grievances personally before the Sultan, and to point out the causes of the dissatisfaction prevalent, with suggestions for the amelioration of the condition of their unhappy country, in order that proper measures might be devised and found to remedy same permanently.

Among the delegates from Sana'a may be mentioned the names of Syyed Abdul Kadir, Ali-el-Jarrafi, El Kadi Syyed Mahomed-ibn-el-Monsoor, Syyed Hamood-bin-Ghalib, a son and grandson of former Imams, persons of influence, who might rightly be intrusted to voice authoritatively the opinions of the tribes they represent.

The Kazas of Amran, Damar, Jibla, Taiz, Harraz, Aboo Airish, Zebeed, and Hodeidah have sent delegates, the latter only one, owing to the disinclination of the local merchants to go to Constantinople and set forth their views, chiefly through dread of Syyed Ahmed-es-Sherai Pasha, the Mayor of this town, who has managed to get one of his tools included in the deputation to the Palace.

I learn from a reliable source that the Commission, on arrival at Sana'a, dispatched a messenger to the Imam inviting him also to send delegates to accompany those from other parts of the Yemen to Constantinople, but no reply, as far as can be ascertained, was elicited from Syyed Yahya.

It is for this reason probably that the Commission did not waste time at Sana'a endeavouring to arrange an interview with the Imam personally.

The Imperial Commission, shortly after its arrival in the Yemen, caused the issue of an Iradé remitting all arrears of taxes due to the Government up to the end of the Turkish year 1321 (15th March, 1905). These outstanding taxes amount to a considerable sum, especially under the heads "tithes" and "vergo," and the chances of their collection at this stage are almost impossible.

The release, by Imperial order, of about 100 political prisoners and rebels, who have been captured since 1905 and confined in the principal fortress at Sana'a for participation in the revolt, has also been brought about on the recommendation of the above Commission.

Great dissatisfaction in military circles, especially amongst the higher officers, has been manifested on account of the mistaken leniency shown to these Arab ring-leaders, who have given the Turks no end of trouble during the past two years, and whose arrest was only effected with very great difficulty.

The veteran Field-Marshal exhibited his disapproval of the above unwise measure by immediately recapturing after release formally and reinterning at the capital three of the principal offenders.

A wise step towards reform in the administration of this province introduced by the late Commission took the shape of securing an Iradé prohibiting the further employment in the Yemen of six corrupt and undesirable Kaimakams who have spent a good many years in this vilayet amassing wealth by squeezing the weak tax-payers. Amongst these I note the names of Mahmoud Raoof of Taweela, his brother Ahmed Adib, late of Rid'a, and Saleh Bey, at present serving at Zebeed.

The first named who was imprisoned by Hussain Hilmi Pasha some ten years ago, and released in 1905 by Fezi Pasha, was appointed Kaimakam at Taweela after the recapture of the mountainous district north of Sana'a from the Imam, where he was allowed to run loose and plunder the inhabitants openly till arrested a few weeks ago by General Yussuf Pasha, and sent to the capital in chains after the infliction of a severe whipping.

The Commission left Sana'a on the 12th instant for the Taiz district, but were delayed for several days *en route* at Ma'abar, about 40 miles south, owing to the activity of Arab bands in the Jahran country. Three battalions were dispatched from Sana'a under Colonel Mustapha Bey to drive off the rebels, who after six days' skirmishing and severe fighting, were ultimately put to flight, losing heavily.

The towns lying in the district caravan route between the capital and Taiz were visited by the Commission, who, after spending a few days in the Taiz itself, proceeded to Mokha, whence they embarked on the Turkish gun-boat "Custamuni" for Hodeidah.

The dismissal of Mahmoud Nedim Bey, the Adjoint of the Governor-General, has caused not a little surprise throughout the vilayet, where he has done excellent work.

The post of Adjoint was created for the first time at the end of 1904, and its incumbent ever since, who exercised great influence amongst the Arab population and with the Imam Syyed Yahya as well, was a very able official.

The vilayet is now without a single officer of any administrative ability, and a hint might be given to that effect at the proper quarter.

On the 4th instant a Proclamation was published here announcing that 1,500 Arabs from El Ushmor, a place 6 or 8 miles westward of Amran, attempted to march on the latter town, but were repulsed and severely punished by General Yussuf Pasha. The Arab losses were serious, and included forty men killed of the Hashid

tribe. A near relative of the Imam Syyed Yahya, it is reported, was also killed in this engagement, and one of his lieutenants, Abdulla-bin-Monsoor, was wounded. The rebels were led by a notable Sheikh, Nasir Mabkoth.

On the 21st instant Field-Marshal Fezi Pasha set out in person, in command of of a force of four battalions and a few guns, to punish the tribesmen who had rendered the road between Sana'a and Damar unsafe. He surrounded a band of the rebels at a place called Maguela, three to four hours' march south of the capital, but allowed them to make good their escape during the night.

The recent mutinous conduct of time-expired soldiers, reported not long ago, has since been imitated by the officers of the Sana'a garrison. Some 100 junior officers, belonging to the various battalions stationed there, threw down their arms and took up their quarters at the telegraph office.

They have collectively telegraphed to the Sultan demanding arrears of salary, which are considerably overdue, and requesting to be relieved of service in this province, where they have already passed several years.

These officers have now been in possession of the telegraph office for over three weeks, and are anxiously awaiting the reply to their Petition from Constantinople.

It is feared that the junior officers throughout the Yemen will join the mutineers.

With truth and great respect, I have, &c.

(Signed) G. A. RICHARDSON.

[21790] No. 6.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 393.)

Sir, *Therapia, June 27, 1907.*

WITH reference to my despatches No. 371 of the 20th instant and No. 392 of the 25th instant, I have the honour to inform you that the Report of the Special Commission about affairs in the Yemen was discussed at the Council of Ministers held on the 16th instant.

I learn that the Report dwells upon the extreme poverty of the population, and contrasts the action of the Imperial Government, which is mainly concerned with the collection of taxes, with that of neighbouring Governments, which help the people under their rule and give them money. (This is presumably an allusion to the allowances made by the Government of India to the Sheikhs in the Aden Hinterland.) The Commission proposes a certain measure of self-government, setting forth that, in order to flatter the native Sheikhs and to satisfy their ambition, it would be well to choose the Kaimakams and Mutessarifs from among their number instead of sending Turkish officials from Constantinople, the post of Vali being alone retained for a Turk.

The Report proceeds to point out the difficulty of maintaining a force of 50,000 to 60,000 men in the Yemen and the inadequate results which have so far attended the military efforts of the Imperial Government to repress the insurrection which, if not somehow checked, may very shortly (thanks to outside encouragement) spread to the Hedjaz, although hitherto the influence of the Emir of Mecca has prevented this. The Report is said to state that there is no doubt but that the Arab movement is actively encouraged and supported by England, and argues that if some means of winning over the native population are not speedily adopted Turkey will lose what influence and authority she retains in the Red Sea.

The Council came to no definite decision on the subject, but I understand that the feeling of the Ministers who took part in it was generally in favour of concessions being made to the native demands. They are fully conscious of the uselessness of wasting more men and money in a futile attempt to subjugate these insurgent tribes, and, as administrative posts in the Yemen are seldom very remunerative, they are not much sought after by Turkish officials.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[21873] No. 7.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 2.)

(No. 83.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, July 2, 1907.*

MOUZAFER PASHA, the Governor-General of the Lebanon, died on the 27th ultimo. Subject to the approval of the Powers, the Porte intend to appoint Youssouf Bey, "Chef de Cabinet" of the Minister for Foreign Affairs. His candidature is supported by the French and Russian Representatives, and the other Representatives seem to approve; they are submitting his name to the favourable consideration of their respective Governments.

Youssouf Bey enjoys an excellent reputation here, and is an honest and capable official, and I think that his administration would be just and impartial. On the other hand, the fact of his being a member of the Franco family is sure to arouse opposition. The Porte is anxious that the matter should be settled with the least possible delay, as there is a certain amount of excitement in the Lebanon among the Franco and anti-Franco factions. I have asked His Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout for his opinion, and will report his views to you as soon as possible.

[21883] No. 8.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 3.)

(No. 394.)

Sir, *Therapia, June 28, 1907.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 390 of the 25th instant, I have the honour to report that the situation at Bitlis has now improved. I am informed by His Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum that the Defterdar is acting in the place of Ferid Pasha, the late Governor; that the people have dispersed, and that business has again been resumed.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[21840] No. 9.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 66.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, July 3, 1907.*

AN alarming report as to the situation in Armenia has been sent by Russian Ambassador to his Government, who view it with anxiety.

There is not, as far as I can gather, any fresh development since the date of your despatch No. 390, but you may, in concert with your French and Russian colleagues, renew representations to Grand Vizier, if you think it necessary.

22037] No. 10.

The Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company to Foreign Office.—(Received July 4.)

3, *Salter's Hall Court,*
Cannon Street, London, July 2, 1907.

Sir,

WE have the honour to send you herewith extract from a letter received from our Bagdad Agents under date of the 13th May last, which appears to us to be of more than ordinary interest. The reference to the Vali of Pusht-i-Kuh may perhaps interest His Majesty's Minister in Tehran.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. W. MACLEAN,
Secretary.

Inclosure in No. 10.

The Bagdad Agents to The Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Company.

May 13, 1907.

SINCE writing our last letter dated the 11th April, the chief topic of interest to the inhabitants of Bagdad is the state of the weather and the extraordinary quantity of water in the river, and in the plains in the vicinity of the town.

It has been for some time a matter of speculation whether the inhabitants of many of the houses on the river and in the low lying quarter would not be called upon either to remove themselves and their property to higher ground, or undertake a spell of hard manual labour in erecting embankments against the ever encroaching waters.

Heavy showers of rain have fallen frequently, and on the 10th May an unprecedented downpour with a gale approaching a hurricane occurred, ruining several houses and killing a number of people in the street.

The amount of damage recently done by these rains and floods is incalculable, but it is said by the Turkish officials to amount to quite £T. 1,000,000. Growing crops and date gardens have been devastated, and much house property partly ruined. It is not surprising that many of the buildings collapse, as most of them have very little solid foundation. Less than 4 feet below the surface water is found.

On the west side of the river the town has been invaded by the waters from the Euphrates; at the present moment the Vali is engaged with a large number of troops in attempting to repair a breach in the old embankment built on the outskirts of the town in the western side. Hazem Bey, the Vali, appears to be active in his efforts to protect the town.

Whilst making these efforts, he has been commanded by his exalted master to collect subscriptions from the people of the Bagdad Vilayet to a fund for the relief of distress elsewhere. The circumstances connected with Bagdad afforded the Vali an opportunity of declining to comply with the command.

All telegraphic communication with Bagdad is cut off, or is only possible on fitful and rare occasions. The roads are also blocked, more particularly the trade route to Persia, and thousands of loads are lying in the custom-house and in the outer edge of the flood waiting forwardment. Not only is the flood at Bagdad, but at Bakooba much difficulty is experienced in crossing the Diayala.

It is quite distressing to see loads of valuable products and manufactures coming in from Persia in a more or less rotten condition.

To-day we have examined forty-one bales of large carpets for America, which have evidently been lying some time in water, as many of them when handled fall to pieces.

It is needless to say that we may expect to see business very bad for some time to come. On the top of these distressing difficulties, the merchants and dealers have to find 3 per cent. more duty on and after the 25th June next.

Fortunately a very large percentage of the goods now on hand are destined for Persia, and are not in consequence affected by the increased duty.

Ghulam Reza Khan Sirdar Ashraf, Vali of Pusht-i-Kuh.

We mentioned in our last letter that this gentleman has passed through Bagdad on a pilgrimage to Kerbela. He returned on the 15th ultimo, when the writer took the opportunity of calling on him.

Later he took passage with his followers in the steam-ship "Resafa" to go to Samarra, but never reached there, as she ran badly aground within four hours' steam of that place, and the Sirdar Ashraf after thrashing the captain in charge, who by the way, is the same man who was in charge of the steam-ship "Resafa" when she collided with the steam-ship "Khalifah," took horse and returned to Bagdad.

We had another interview with the Sirdar, and took the opportunity of discussing the Dizful-Khoremabad Road project with him. He appeared quite satisfied that it would be possible to keep the road open by judicious payment to the several heads of the tribes, and seemed inclined to do all in his power to forward the enterprise. He seemed to be an intelligent man, but, it is said, that his uncle is the ruling spirit of the tribe at present.

He gave the writer a very cordial invitation to visit him.

He left Bagdad yesterday accompanied by a Dr. Groethe, a German gentleman sent out here on a similar mission as Mr. G. Lloyd. Dr. Groethe intends travelling to the Pusht-i-Kuh and thence to Ahwaz, Ispahan, and Tehran. We believe he is engaged in acquiring particulars for the establishment of a German Bank at Bagdad, to be run in connection with the proposed German Bank in Persia.

Hamidieh Steamers.

It is currently reported that the two new steamers have already been named the steam-ship "Satwat" and the steam-ship "Shoket," and that they are expected shortly to leave Europe for Bussorah. It is also said that the recent exceptionally high rise in the river has floated the steam-ship "Resafa," but we are unable to get confirmation of this.

Ali Sidis Bey, a member of the Senieh Department at Constantinople, has arrived here on a special Mission to report on the feasibility of making the River Euphrates navigable. Ali Sidis Bey was head clerk in the Senieh Department at Bagdad about four years ago, where he had been virtually as a political exile, and after a short stay returned to Constantinople by special permission.

It is said he is a great friend of Sassoon Effendi, the late Manager of the Hamidieh steamers in Bagdad.

[22063] No. 11.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 84.) *Constantinople, July* 4, 1907.

(Telegraphic.) P.

IN continuation of my preceding telegram, I have to report that there are, as usual, two parties in the Lebanon in contention as to the appointment of a Governor-General. One, which favours the candidature of Youssouf Bey, is headed by the Druse Chief, Mustapha Arslan, and the Maronite Patriarch, the other by prominent officials, representing all sects, and by several Notables, among them Nassif Djemblat, another Druse Chief. There is much tension, and the latter party intend to urge on the Palace and the Embassies the selection of some one whose family is unconnected with the district.

Sir R. Drummond-Hay thinks that these views should be considered before a decision is taken, in order to further the prospects of tranquillity and maintain the political equilibrium, but I believe myself that delay will only increase the agitation caused by place-hunters and other malcontents of the two parties.

This is also the view of the Russian Ambassador and of M. Boppe, who think that as the Sultan has proposed a candidate who is respectable it would be well for the Powers to accept the selection.

[22135] No. 12.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 5.)

India Office, July 4, 1907.

Sir,

I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Morley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 27th May last, which inclosed a despatch from His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, containing a suggestion that the influence of His Majesty's Government should be exercised on Sheikh Mubarek to prevent his undertaking military operations against the Ajman tribe, save in self defence.

In reply, I am to forward copy of telegraphic correspondence, from which it will be seen that the Government of India would prefer in existing circumstances not to issue further warnings to the Sheikh against mixing himself up with the tribes of the interior.

Subject to the concurrence of Secretary Sir E. Grey, Mr. Morley proposes to inform the Government of India by telegram that His Majesty's Government accept their view.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 12.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

June 21, 1907.

(Telegraphic.) P.

YOUR telegram dated 4th June: Koweit.

Only the early history of the case is dealt with in report by Consul at Bussorah, dated 17th April, which has just reached us. Information at our disposal is to the effect that only reprisals on Ajman, near Koweit, for thefts of twenty herds of Koweit cattle were arranged by Sheikh Mubarek, whose threats sufficed to induce tribe to come to terms. (See diaries of Political Residency, Persian Gulf, of 24th and 31st March, 7th April, and 5th May, under heading "Koweit," inclosed with our Foreign Secretary's letters of 18th and 25th April and 23rd May respectively.) Our officers in the Gulf have been watching matter carefully, and no necessity for further warning Sheikh nor danger of widespread disturbances has been reported by them. Seeing that it might tend to weaken our influence over Mubarek we would, in the circumstances, prefer not to issue further warnings to him against involving himself with the tribes of the interior, unless His Majesty's Government have information to a different effect.

[22363] No. 13.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received July* 7.)

(No. 85.)

Constantinople, July 7, 1907.

(Telegraphic.) P.

GOVERNORSHIP of the Lebanon.

With reference to your telegram No. 67 of the 4th July, my colleagues and I have agreed to accept the nomination by Sublime Porte of Youssouf Bey Coussa, and in accordance with precedent of 1902 will probably sign Protocol to this effect to-morrow.

[22364] No. 14.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received July* 7.)

(No. 86.)

Constantinople, July 7, 1907.

(Telegraphic.) P.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 78 of the 23rd June.

My Russian colleague has urged the French Chargé d'Affaires to send his Consul from Erzeroum to Bitlis, though I was under the impression that the Russian Ambassador agreed that the co-operation of the British Consul with his at that place would be sufficient.

I informed my Russian and French colleagues that, unless we were prepared to go much further, if necessary, than I imagined was contemplated by any of our Governments, I was convinced that it would be unwise and unjustifiable for the Consuls of the three Vilayets of Van, Bitlis, and Erzeroum to meet to examine the situation as proposed by the Russian Government (your telegram No. 63 of the 19th June).

I told them I thought any action would be most undesirable which could be interpreted by the Armenians as evidence that the Armenian question was once more on the tapis and that foreign intervention was probable, or which wore the appearance of a diplomatic demonstration.

I added that we would freely co-operate with the Russian and French in trying to protect the peaceful inhabitants from oppression, but that in my opinion it would be most cruel on our part to buoy up the hopes of the Armenians falsely.

This morning the French Chargé d'Affaires informed me that his Government were inclined to take my view of the situation, and would for the time being defer sending the French Consul to Bitlis. He said they intended to mention the subject to you directly.

[22371] No. 15.

Consul Crow to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received July* 7.)

Bussorah, July 7, 1907.

(Telegraphic.) P.

FURTHER disturbances in this district on Tigris: Your telegram of the 30th May.

Serious damage to grain traffic. Sailing-vessels have been attacked and one burned, according to report of captain of Lynch's steamer, and it is reported by British firm of Fenwick that two of their grain lighters were attacked and looted and one of the crew lost his life.

[22445] No. 16.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received July* 8.)

(No. 397.)

Therapia, June 28, 1907.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. H. E. Wilkie Young, His Majesty's Acting Consul at Trebizond, reporting on the general condition of his vilayet, and giving an interesting account of a tour recently undertaken by him, on my authority, through a portion of his Consular district.

Mr. Wilkie Young includes with his despatch some confidential information in regard to the principal officials at Trebizond and Sivas, and he further incloses a list of the copper mines in the Trebizond Vilayet.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 16.

Acting Consul Young to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 22.)

Trebizond, June 8, 1907.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Excellency herewith some notes on the general condition of the Vilayet of Trebizond, since my arrival here on the 15th February last, together with a summary of Memoranda made during a recent tour (2nd–28th May) through parts of the Vilayets of Trebizond and Sivas in this Consular district.

The notes referred to are arranged under the following headings:—

1. Trebizond, 15th February–8th June.
2. Tour Ordou, Fatsa, Unieh, Samsoun, Merzifoun, Amassia, Tokat, Sivas, Shabin Karahissar, and Kerasound.
3. Communications.
4. General.
5. List of principal officials, Trebizond.
6. List of principal officials, Sivas.
7. Population of Trebizond Vilayet.
8. Population of Sivas Vilayet.
9. Copper mines, Trebizond.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. E. WILKIE YOUNG.

Inclosure 2 in No. 16.

Notes on the General Condition of the Vilayet of Trebizond.

1. *Trebizond.*

EVENTS of interest during the past three months and a-half have been the arrival on the 19th February of the Governor-General, Ziver Bey, the assassination on the 15th March of Hamdi Pasha, Commandant of troops, and the arrival of the latter's successor, Cossack Suleiman Pasha on the 4th May.

The condition of the vilayet, so far as I am able to judge from perusal of Mr. Longworth's Reports and various expressions of local opinion, compares favourably with that during Rechad Bey's nerveless administration, and the latter's transfer to Adrianople seems to have been hailed with general satisfaction.

Ziver Bey was summoned in haste to Constantinople on the 1st June, and it is not yet known locally whether he will return. (Despatch No. 19 of the 5th June.)

Naji Effendi, who assassinated Hamdi Pasha, the Commandant, on the 15th March and was subsequently condemned to death, has, contrary to general expectation, not yet been executed, and remains in prison. Naji Effendi's grievance was a personal one, but excited strong and general sympathy, and this perhaps accounts for the apparent hesitation of the authorities at Constantinople to give orders for his execution. The circumstances were reported in despatch No. 8 of the 16th March.

"Cossack" Suleiman Pasha, the new Commandant, arrived at Trebizond on the 4th May. His present rank in the army is "Ferik Evel." He is a Circassian of the noble family of Anzor, Cabartai tribe, and his father is said to have been Aide-de-camp to a former Czar of Russia. He saw service in the Greek war, and was subsequently appointed to Bagdad, from which place, it is generally believed, he was transferred to Erzinjan in consequence of a misunderstanding either with certain members of the Consular Corps or with the local authorities.

The disturbances at Fatsa, reported in my despatch No. 15 of the 26th April, have been disposed of in the manner described on p. 6 of this Report.

The appointment of Jemal Bey Nemli Zade as President of the Municipality of Trebizond should prove a gain to the community at large. He accepts no pay for his services, and shows signs of honest and intelligent enterprise. The streets are better lighted and kept than ever before, and several minor improvements have been taken in hand. He is a member of the family of Nemli Zade, which is by far the richest and most influential in Trebizond, and is said to own half the town, besides valuable properties at Samsoun, Erzeroum, and Constantinople.

The Trebizond prison, built to accommodate some 400 prisoners, having proved far too small for requirements, additional accommodation is being provided, and a small hospital erected, in the old fortifications. The work has been taken in hand none too soon. I am told that there are at present 600 prisoners in gaol, and fights of a serious nature, due to overcrowding, have been repeatedly reported.

It was reported from Samsoun that on the 10th May forty Armenians, coming from the interior, succeeded in escaping to Russia in a small sailing-vessel which was lying in a bay some six hours distant from Samsoun. On the following day a similar attempt seems to have been made by forty other Armenians, who however had the misfortune to be surprised by the patrol, arrested, and imprisoned. Amongst them, it is said, were fifteen women and ten boys.

2. *A Tour through parts of Trebizond and Sivas.*

On the 2nd May I left Trebizond, and on the following day visited the ports of Ordu, Fatsa, and Unieh. At Ordu, a town of some 5,000 inhabitants and the headquarters of a Kaimakam, there are indications of progress in numerous well-built houses and straight streets planted with trees on either side. Situated at the head of the best existing route from the coast to Sivas, it ought to develop in the future.

Fatsa and Unieh show as yet small signs of progress, but considering the wealth of the country behind them and how little has been done until now to promote their interests and foster trade and industry, one cannot help hoping that increased opportunities will bring great things in their train to places possessed of such

considerable natural advantages. A scheme is on foot to connect Unieh with Sivas by a "chaussée," which, if carried out, will bring one of the most important centres in Anatolia within three days' easy travelling of the coast. Nothing whatever appears to have been done to improve the condition of the ports at these places. Merchandize is landed by lighters as well as conditions of weather allow, the hammals often having to wade up to their waists in mud and water in order to bring goods ashore from the lighters.

At Fatsa I was able to obtain information from a reliable source with regard to the disturbances in that neighbourhood to which I have already referred. The root of the evil is an old one, and lies in the ill-feeling existing between the inhabitants of the district and the muhajirs (immigrants from Russia), who number some thousands, and, being armed, tyrannize over and occasionally brutally ill-treat their less fortunate Mahommedan neighbours. A crisis was reached a few weeks ago when a Mahommedan woman and three children were said to have been murdered and mutilated by muhajirs. Telegrams were sent by the outraged villagers to the authorities at Trebizond and Constantinople, with the result that the attention of the Palace was attracted, and eventually Arif Effendi, Chief Secretary to the Governor-General's Council, was sent to the spot to investigate and arrange matters. I hear that the Mudir of the village which was the centre of trouble has been dismissed, and that comparative tranquillity prevails. So far as I am aware, the authors of the crime had not been punished.

In this neighbourhood there are mineral springs, which with organization and care might become a source of profit.

Samsoun (*May* 4-5).—The town, as might be expected from its position at the head of the great high road from the Black Sea to Bagdad, shows signs of growing prosperity, and I am told that the branch of the Imperial Ottoman Bank had a "turnover" last year of 7,000,000*l*. Further particulars are reserved for the annual Commercial Report for this district. The present Mutessarif, Jemal Bey, is, I fear, not a type of the better Ottoman official. Boorish, fanatical, and hostile to foreign influence, he would seem to care little for the good of the district intrusted to him.

Khavza (*May* 6). Here there are hot mineral springs, which were a source of prosperity in the days of the Roman Empire, and continue year by year to attract visitors in large numbers even from distant parts of the country. The waters are said to be particularly beneficial in cases of rheumatism and various forms of skin disease.

Merzifun (*May* 7–8–9).—Apparently one of the healthiest places in Turkey. Population from 24,000 to 26,000, of whom two-thirds are Turks, and the remainder, with the exception of 100 or 500 Greeks, Armenians. The present Kaimakam is Nejmi Bey, who, according to the information which I was able to obtain, is an excellent official. The American missionaries seemed to be on the best of terms with the local authorities, for whom they had nothing but praise.

There are some 1,000 "gingham" looms in the town, and all the yarn for these comes from Manchester. It is obviously a rising place, and well worth the attention of the British merchant; and, from what I hear in various towns in the interior, it would seem desirable for British firms to establish direct relations with purchasers on the spot, and so save 20 to 25 per cent., which at present goes into the pockets of Levantine commission agents at Constantinople. I am informed that the Armenian firm of Ibranossian had a "turn-over" last year of 414,000*l*.

Corn, grapes, walnuts, and fruit of all kinds are produced in abundance, and in the immediate neighbourhood are farms which have the appearance of being well managed and equipped with comparatively up-to-date appliances. The climate is delightful, and in the height of summer the nights are always cool.

The American college is almost self-supporting, and seems to be doing excellent work. There are about 300 boys boarding in the establishment, whose fees amount to some 3,000*l*. yearly. Of these 30 per cent. become merchants, 30 per cent. teachers, 12 per cent. doctors, and of the remainder some clergymen and some lawyers. There are about 400 girl boarders, whose fees amount annually to upwards of 1,000*l*. In the hospital there is accommodation for forty-eight in-patients, and at the time of my visit all the beds were occupied. During the first four months of the present year over 300 operations were performed on persons of all nationalities and religious denominations; and here, as indeed at all the other American Missions in Turkey, which it has been my privilege to visit, no praise is too high for the work which is being done both in medicine and surgery.

Amasia (*May* 10–11.)—The seat of a Mutessarif, and a town which for over 2,000 years has been accounted one of the important places in Asia Minor. The

population—partly Turkish, partly Armenian—amounts to about 40,000. The streets are relatively well kept, and there is a general air of prosperity about the town which would seem to promise well for foreign enterprise. The present Governor has travelled in Europe, speaks French fluently, and is highly spoken of by the Europeans who come in contact with him. Fruit of all kinds, especially apples, abundant. The wheat of Amasia is still reputed of the finest quality.

Tokat (*May* 12–13–14).—The seat of a Mutessarif; population about 40,000. I was informed that Manchester cotton goods are annually brought to Tokat to the value of 38,000*l*. These are printed in Tokat with vegetable dyes from wooden blocks and distributed all over Turkey. German firms have attempted to compete in this trade, but so far without success. Thousands of these printed cotton cloths are to be seen hanging in the stables of the larger Khans, the atmosphere of which is said to intensify the brilliancy of the colouring, which, being from vegetable dye, is often far from inartistic.

The copper industry of Tokat is also important. The metal is brought here from mines in the interior, melted, and sent to England, where it is further prepared, and whence it is eventually returned to Tokat in the form of copper sheets, which are made into dishes, trays, and utensils of all kinds.

The Régie business at Tokat is estimated at about 2,000,000 kilog. annually.

The Jesuit Mission at Tokat, established in 1880, would seem, under the able guidance of the present Superior, Père d'Autume, to be one of the most enterprising and progressive in the country. So far as I am aware, there is no Science School between Constantinople and Bagdad approaching that of the Jesuit Fathers at Tokat. They have 650 pupils—250 boys and 400 girls. They have an excellent dispensary, but at present no hospital. It is difficult to resist the temptation of laying special stress on the work of the Christian Missions in Turkey, of whatever denomination. Their influence is always on the side of civilization and progress, and, by the introduction of fresh ideas and tastes, must inevitably benefit a far wider circle than that to which their energies are specially devoted. It is to be regretted that political exigencies render it impossible for Moslems to avail themselves of the advantages thus brought to their doors. But it is satisfactory to record that most of the Missions in this part of Turkey appear to be conducted with discretion and tact, and that relations with local authorities are as a rule good.

Sivas (*May* 15–19).—The population of the city of Sivas is estimated at about 60,000. Much is rightly said in favour of the present Vali, Reshid Akif Pasha, but I know no city in Turkey which creates a more unfavourable impression than the capital of his province, the streets of which are in a deplorable condition of neglect and filth, and, being unlighted and full of holes, are positively dangerous after dark. It is two years since my last visit to Sivas, but I failed to notice the slightest improvement in this respect.

Great credit is due to the Governor-General for the energy with which he has practically stamped out brigandage in his district. He is an Albanian of good family, being the son of Akif Pasha (formerly Vali of Konia and Bagdad), and it is generally believed that he was appointed to Sivas, where he is detained practically as an exile, because the Government are suspicious of his influence in his own country. Reshid Akif Pasha appears to be a man of no extraordinary intelligence or capacity, but he has some strength of purpose, and sense to accept good advice. He is generally respected for his integrity and the discipline which he maintains among his subordinates. He is said to be possessed of large private means.

The Vali spoke with some satisfaction of various public works which he is causing to be undertaken in his district; but it is necessary to observe that these efforts are not always an unmixed blessing to those whom they are meant to benefit. For instance, for the bathing establishment which is to be constructed at Chermuk, the villagers of Kurbagagh will have to bring sixty ox-cart loads of timber three days' journey. As it is a village of only 100 houses, the hardship is not difficult to imagine, and its position is not exceptional.

There are American and Jesuit Missions at Sivas, both of which seem to be doing excellent work. Since the departure of Dr. Jewett a year ago no American Consul has been appointed; and M. Bonhenri, the French Vice-Consul, who arrived in Turkey for the first time a month ago, is the only foreign Representative residing there.

I understand that the Sivas carpet factory belonging to the Smyrna firm of Aliotti is to be taken over on the 1st January next by an English Company known as "The Amalgamated Oriental Carpets Manufacturers (Limited)."

A list of the principal officials at Sivas is annexed to this Report. The leading

political exiles residing at Sivas were referred to in my despatch No. 16 of the 1st June. The population of the various sanjaks is given on p. 7 below.

I left Sivas on the 20th May, and, after visiting the Kazas of Kochkiri and Sushehri, arrived (24th May) at Karahissar, the chief town of the Mutessariflik of the same name. The little town of Enderes, by the way, the centre of the Kochkiri district, is one of the most attractive in this part of Turkey. Its orchards and gardens are widely famous. In the immediate neighbourhood are hot mineral springs.

Karahissar.—The population probably does not exceed 15,000, and until the Kerasund–Sivas road is far more frequented it is not likely to become a place of much commercial importance.

From Karahissar to Kerasund (three days) the road runs through scenery of great beauty, and ascends at one point to an elevation of 7,500 feet. The mountains are covered with forests of spruce, beech, oak, wild cherry, alder, mountain ash, &c., and as the road descends towards the Black Sea vegetation becomes more and more varied and luxuriant. In places the mountain sides are literally covered with the pink-purple *rhododendron Ponticum* and yellow azalea

On the 25th May passed through Ijessi, where are remains of the workings of the English silver-lead mine, now abandoned.

On the 26th and 27th May Koulakaia, where I spent the night, and had an opportunity of inspecting the saw-mills owned in partnership by M. Zarifi, of Constantinople, and Mr. George Pisani, a British subject residing at Kerasund. These gentlemen appear to have obtained permission to cut 20,000 cubic metres of timber from the neighbouring spruce forests. The value of a cubic metre is about 2*l*., and they are cutting at the rate of 3,000 cubic metres a-year. I gather that the undertaking is a fairly prosperous one; but one cannnot help wondering whether the country is in any sense getting the value of the fine forests, of which it is so recklessly allowing itself to be denuded, without any provision for reafforestation. Without technical knowledge it would be absurd to criticize, but it would be satisfactory to know that the question of forests in this part of Turkey is in the hands of efficient experts with an eye to the permanent good of the country. Only forty hands, all Greek, are employed in these works; and the "chaussée," elsewhere in tolerable repair, seems to suffer considerably between Koulakain and Kerasund from the traffic of narrow-wheeled ox-carts laden with the heavy timber of the enterprise referred to.

From Koulakaia the road descends through magnificent scenery to the shores of the Black Sea. The last 12 or 15 miles the whole country is covered with hazel, nuts being the chief item of export from Kerasund, and amounting in value to something like 200,000*l*. The shelling of these alone means some 15,000*l*. a-year to the little town.

Kerasund (*May* 27–28).—The population of Kerasund is estimated at 20,000, and is increasing. In the inland parts of this district the reverse is the case, as the villagers are leaving their homes to settle in the towns or emigrate abroad.

Kerasund is the most attractive of the Black Sea ports, and shows signs of growing prosperity. Details of its trade are reserved for the annual Commercial Report of this district.

3. *Communications.*

The Samsoun–Sivas road (212 miles), excepting the first few miles in the immediate neighbourhood of Samsoun, is, on the whole, in very tolerable repair, and with comparatively small expenditure might be opened to motor traffic (I quote an expert who was with me), to the immeasurable advantage of the whole district.

From Sivas to Zera, Enderes, Karahissar, and Kerasund (182 miles) the cart road is in fair condition, and a little regular attention is all that is required to keep it open for wheel traffic during the greater part of the year. Owing, however, to the absence of a bridge in the neighbourhood of Karahissar, the road, which has evidently been constructed at great expense, is impassable for carriages at this point in flood time, and therefore must not be regarded as at all times available. (Generally speaking, the bridges are the weak point in the communications in this part of Turkey. They are usually of timber, or timber on old stone foundation, and are often in a perilous state of disrepair. If the Turkish Government could be induced to see the advantages from the point of view of economy there should be a good opening for firms interested in iron bridges all along the principal high roads.

A cart road from Unieh to Sivas, which seems to have existed in part as much as fifteen years ago, but had been let fall into complete disrepair, is now receiving attention,

and, if plans are persevered in, Sivas will shortly be within 135 kilom. of the Black Sea by a good carriage road. The journey by the Samsoun route generally occupies six to seven days. I understand that the works actually being taken in hand from both ends by the authorities of the two vilayets. Their labours should meet at Hamidieh, which is exactly half-way between Sivas and the coast.

The engineer of the vilayet, Mr. Razivanowicz, a British subject, tells me that a cart road is to be constructed eastwards from Trebizond as far as Rizeh, a distance of about eighteen hours, *i.e.*, roughly, 60 miles.

Westward from Trebizond the coast road is only open to wheel traffic as far as Platana, 9 miles. Beyond that point, so far as I am aware, there is nothing but a mule track, and a difficult one at that. In this connection it is not uninteresting to recall that 2,000 years ago Xenophon wrote: "We reached Kerasund from Trebizond in three days easily, there being a good road." In 1907 two men and three horses with difficulty made their way from Kerasund in the direction of Trebizond, there being no road.

4. General.

The general impression left by the 400 miles or so of country traversed is one of great wealth and, given reasonable security of life and property, boundless possibilities. It may be said roughly that hardly an acre of waste land was passed—crops, varying in quality from somewhat poor things on the steep and arid hill-slopes at high elevations to the rich produce of the plains in the neighbourhood of Amasia, orchards, nut-gardens, mulberry plantations, pasture—incomparably rich in the lower valleys and varying greatly on the higher mountains—forests, every acre up to an elevation of 6,000 feet seems to be turned to account by Nature or man; and if the methods of the latter are primitive, and the results attained relatively poor, the fault is with an indifferent administration, which fails on the one hand to provide any sort of facility itself to the agriculturist, and, on the other, bars the way to progress from abroad.

The cattle are mostly poor in appearance, and the cows give comparatively little milk, and that of inferior quality. Sheep, on the other hand, are distinctly good, and the wool looks clean and of good quality. That used in the carpet factories at Sivas, &c., comes mostly from the district of Azizie. Within the last three years the export of eggs to Europe has increased enormously, with the result that I find the price of both eggs and fowls has doubled all over the country.

I have said nothing of the mineral springs, of which I saw several, and which seem to exist in all parts of this district; nor of the great mineral wealth of this part of Turkey, of which I can only speak from hear-say, so many of the mines formerly worked and famous being now closed down. A list of copper mines is annexed.

The most pressing needs of the people seem to be—

1. The reduction of the overwhelming burden of taxation;
2. Improved communications with a view to cheap and rapid transport of produce;
3. Introduction of new methods and machinery, and, if possible, some instruction in the elements of farming and stock-rearing and fruit and vegetable growing.

Were the present Administration more favourable to foreign enterprise, there seems no doubt that farming on a large scale might be carried on with profit to all concerned, and to the great benefit of the country at large.

5. Principal Officials: Trebizond.

(Confidential.)

Vali, Ziver Bey. (See p. 2 of this Report and No. 19 of the 5th June, 1907.)

Muavin, "Adjoint au Gouverneur-Général," Gregoire Vegleri Bey, is a man of excellent reputation, and perhaps the only Christian Muavin in Turkey who has acted as Governor-General. This he did with marked success on the death of Cadri Bey, and until the arrival of his successor, for three or four weeks, January–February 1903. He is the son-in-law of Caratheodori Pasha, Prince of Samos.

Commandant, "Cossack" Suleiman Pasha, arrived the 4th May. (See above, p. 2.)

Defterdar, Ahmed Hamdi Effendi, of Angora: has been here about eighteen months; is regarded as fanatical, and does not enjoy a good reputation.

Kadi, Beha-el-Din Bey: is at present, since the 1st June, in charge of the vilayet during absence of Governor-General; takes bribes openly. Has been here about two years.

Mektubji, Ahmet Sureya Effendi: a nonentity, is well connected, and tells me he was at one time attached to the Ottoman Embassy in Paris.

Public Prosecutor, Ihsan Bey: a Mollah; an excellent man, enjoying a deservedly high reputation. He came from Aleppo some six months ago. Is known to me personally.

President of the Civil Court, Zia-el-Din Bey. Came from Bagdad about three months ago; well spoken of.

President of Criminal Court, First Instance, Hussein Rushdi Bey: honest and much liked by the people; has been here about two years.

President of Criminal Court, Second Instance, Kiamil Bey: recently arrived from Monastir; as yet little known.

President of the Commercial Court, Fikri Effendi: an Armenian; honest, intelligent, and of good repute.

Mudir of the Censorship, Tewfik Effendi: has lately been decorated by French Government.

Dragoman of the Vilayet, Antoine Effendi: an Armenian; has held present post twenty-seven years. Would appear to be in no way above the average native Christian official in his position in other vilayets.

Chief Commissary of Police, Hussein Ruhi Effendi: is reputed neither strong nor intelligent, nor upright.

Alai Bey, Commanding Gendarmerie, Osman Bey, a Circassian. No complaints are heard of him, and he is credited with doing his best.

6. Principal Officials: Sivas.

Vali, Reshad Akif Pasha (Vezir): aged about 45; is credited with great ambitions. (See above, p. 4.)

Commandant, Mehmet Khouloussi Pasha (Ferik): has been here twelve or fifteen years; a useless man, fanatical; commands 16th Division of Redifs; behaved badly during massacres; speaks French.

Kadi, Rifant Bey: arrived a month ago; reputed a good man; formerly at Kharput.

Muavin, Aristidi Pasha: an excellent official of long experience, to whose tactful guidance the present Vali is said to owe any successes in his administration.

Defterdar, Hassan Fuzil Effendi; quiet and inoffensive; has been here about a year.

Mektubji, Esad Raouf Bey: has been here three years; is the Vali's tool; honest, so far as is known.

Munrif Mudiri, Tahir Bey: also a Vali's man; has been here six or seven years.

Alai Bey (Commandant of Gendarmerie), Mehmet Bey: not very honest.

Tabour Aghassi (Major of Gendarmerie), Ali Bey (Merken): a Georgian; old and inefficient.

Shefki Bey (cavalry): young, and considered a good man; saved several Christians during the massacres.

Chief Commissionary of Police, Hussein Effendi: fanatical; has been here five years.

Department of Justice, Inspector of Justice, Zuhdi Bey. After the massacres two Inspectors were appointed, one Moslem and one Christian; but a few years ago the Christian was removed, and in his place a Muavin was appointed (a Greek), who was transferred to Kossova, and up to date no successor has arrived. Zuhdi is very fanatical.

President of Criminal Court, First Instance, Jemal Bey: honest; formerly at Bussorah; here four years.

President of Criminal Court, Second Instance, Reshid Bey: came a month ago, and is as yet an unknown quantity.

Istinaf Mudai Ummumisi, Ali Yaver Effendi: takes no bribes, but is fanatical.

President of Civil Court (vacant).

Mudai Ummumi Muavini (vacant).

President of Municipality, Abdul Rahman Effendi: honest, but ignorant.

7. POPULATION of the four Sanjaks of Trebizond Vilayet (area, 12,500 square miles).

Sanjak of Trebizond		641,500
,, Gumushkhaneh		124,500
,, Djanik (capital, Samsoun)		328,000
,, Lazistan (capital, Rizeh)		167,400
The population of the town of Trebizond is estimated at about		55,000

8. POPULATION of the four Sanjaks of Sivas Vilayet (area, 23,970 square miles).

Population.	Moslems.	Christians.
Sivas	350,980	82,625
Tokat	200,698	29,792
Amassia	187,900	35,560
Karahissar	114,789	36,688
Total Vilayet	854,367	184,665
Grand total	1,039,032	

The above figures were taken within the last twelve months.

9. *Copper Mines in the Trebizond Vilayet.*

In the neighbourhood of Tripoli :—	East of Tripoli :—
Aghalik.	Kian.
Karilar Madeni.	Esserli.
Kararik.	Irsail.
Labannas.	Karabeuruk.
N.B.—The above are west of Tripoli.	Kirlak.

In the Kaza of Keurili : Dere Maden.

N.B.—In view of the very great increase in the price of copper, much attention has lately been attracted to the mines in this district, and it is hoped to submit a Report on this subject to His Majesty's Embassy so soon as reliable particulars have been collected. The local authorities are receiving a large number of Petitions for provisional permission to start work, such permission being renewed from time to time and valid until a Firman can be obtained.

(Signed) H. E. WILKIE YOUNG.

[22671] No. 17.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 407.) *Therapia, July 4, 1907.*

Sir,

WITH reference to your telegram No. 66 of the 3rd instant, on the subject of the situation in Armenia, I have the honour to report that I received yesterday a telegram from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, announcing his arrival at Bitlis, and acknowledging the receipt of the telegraphic instructions I had sent him on the 14th and 23rd ultimo, copies of which were inclosed in my despatch No. 377 of the 24th ultimo.

Captain Dickson reports that the revolt at Bitlis was organized by a Council of Sheikhs, who, after the riot had occurred, sent a telegram to the Porte demanding that the Vali should be removed. A reply was received from the Palace threatening to employ military force against the malcontents. To this the Council of Sheikhs answered that they had 15,000 Kurds under arms. The Palace thereupon gave orders that the Vali should be removed from his post. Steps were then taken by the Council to disperse the mob, and also to disband the force of armed Kurds who, amounting to some 10,000 men, were in the neighbourhood and awaiting orders to come to the assistance of the townsmen.

The Council of Sheikhs is showing nervousness as to the results of the inquiry of

the Commission into the causes of the disturbance. The Turkish troops are encamped at a distance of two hours from Bitlis. Captain Dickson considers that the immediate appointment of a new Vali is necessary, as the present Acting Agent of the Governor-General who has just been dismissed has proved himself to be incapable.

Captain Dickson found a state of almost complete anarchy prevailing in the country through which he travelled on his way to Bitlis, which comprises the districts in the neighbourhood of Jezireh and Seirt. The reports which have reached him of the condition of affairs in the district of Moush are extremely serious. Many Armenians are said to have been massacred by Kurds, and many soldiers are reported to have been killed and wounded.

Captain Dickson concludes by saying that as he finds he can do nothing in Bitlis until the arrival of the new Vali or of the Vali of Trebizond, who was expected in ten days' time, and as the town of Bitlis is perfectly quiet, he is proceeding to the Moush district to inquire into the condition of affairs there, it being impossible to obtain trustworthy information in Bitlis.

A later telegram received from Captain Dickson informed me that he had decided to postpone his journey to Moush, as he had heard that the Vali of Trebizond might arrive in Bitlis within the course of the next three days, and he asked to be favoured with instructions.

I accordingly telegraphed to him to-day approving the postponement of his journey to Moush till after the arrival of the Vali of Trebizond, and requesting him to act on the instructions which I had already given him as to his attitude and line of action.

I told him that Tahir Pasha was, to the best of my belief, a capable and honest official, who would probably be glad of his advice and cooperation. I said that he should continue to act in concert with the Russian Vice-Consul, to protest to the Vali any officials who had failed lately to protect the inhabitants, and to endeavour to prevent to the utmost of his power the Hamidieh troops from committing outrages.

I explained that the chief objects which we wished to attain were that the life of the people should not be rendered unbearable by the exactions of taxation which they were absolutely unable to pay, and that an end should be put immediately to the persecution of the Armenian inhabitants, who it appeared were being dispossessed of their lands for the benefit of Moslem immigrants.

If he reported to me any complaints which were substantiated by trustworthy evidence I undertook to support them with energetic representations, and I expressed the conviction that the Grand Vizier would uphold Tahir Pasha in any line of policy he might adopt which had in view the protection of the peaceful inhabitants and the maintenance of order.

(Confidential.)

The Russian Ambassador has shown considerable anxiety throughout the recent incidents in Armenia, which I believe to be due in great measure to the serious consequences which may ensue from a large influx of emigrants from Armenia into the Caucasus, where the condition of affairs is already so precarious and unsatisfactory.

I am, however, in close touch with M. Zinoview, and communicate to him all the information I receive from our Consuls bearing on the condition of affairs, and I have also informed him of the representations I have made to the Porte, for which his Excellency has repeatedly expressed his thanks.

The situation is far from satisfactory, but I do not consider it to be on the whole so dangerous as it is described by the Russian Consular officers in these parts, the majority of whom are on bad terms with the Valis of their respective provinces.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[22647] No. 18.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 9.)

(No. 87.) *Constantinople, July 8, 1907.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

LEBANON Governorship.

At their meeting to-day the Ambassadors unanimously approved the appointment of Youssouf Bey as Governor-General of the Lebanon.

[22371] No. 19.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 70.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, July 9, 1907.*

IN view of the circumstances reported in the telegram from His Majesty's Consul at Bussorah, which has been repeated to you to-day, you should renew representations to the Porte respecting the disturbances on the Tigris which you were instructed to make in my telegram of the 10th July, 1906.

[22877] No. 20.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 10.)

(No. 88.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, July 10, 1907.*

DISTURBANCES on the Tigris.

With reference to your telegram No. 70 of the 9th instant.

The Sublime Porte will do all they can to protect navigation on the River Tigris, but, the tribes being turbulent, for the forces at their command the task is difficult. I am urging on the Porte the necessity of a Turkish gun-boat for regular patrol.

To mention river patrol by a British gun-boat would not at this moment be advisable, as our negotiations respecting oil-fields in Mesopotamia, which are now in a critical though fairly promising state, would be at once upset by any such suggestion.

No. 21.

[Nil.]

[23037] No. 22.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 11.)

(No. 91.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, July 11, 1907.*

QUESTION of Greek Archbishop for Cyprus: Your telegram No. 73 of the 10th instant.

In view of the Philhellenism which was exhibited in Cyprus a few years ago, and which, even though only latent, no doubt still exists, I venture to suggest, with due deference to the opinion expressed by the Colonial Secretary, that it is unwise to allow the Œcumenical Patriarch to interfere in the matter without first obtaining our approval and sanction. Such a policy does not, in my opinion, accord with our interests and general policy in the island, and cannot fail to encourage the Greeks and discourage the Moslems.

[22135] No. 23.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Foreign Office, July 11, 1907.

Sir,

I AM directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant transmitting telegraphic correspondence with the Government of India relating to the Sheikh of Koweit.

I am to state, in reply, that Sir E. Grey concurs in Mr. Secretary Morley's proposal to inform the Government of India that His Majesty's Government accept their view that in existing circumstances it is inadvisable to issue further warnings to the Sheikh against mixing himself up with the tribes of the interior.

I am, &c.
(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

[23057] No. 24.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 12.)

(No. 408.)
Sir, *Constantinople, July 8, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith paraphrases of a telegram from Captain Dickson, His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, on the subject of the situation in the Bitlis Vilayet, and also of my reply.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 24.

Vice-Consul Dickson to Sir N. O'Conor.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Bitlis, July 6, 1907.*

REPORTS of serious fighting and barbarity continue to come in from the Mousb plain and the district round Van. It is impossible to obtain reliable information here. The Acting Vali says that he supposes that everything is quiet, as he has no information.

Tahir Pasha may arrive shortly, as he is reported to be at Mousb. Please inform me if you can whether he will only conduct the inquiry and report on the revolt, or whether he will administer the vilayet.

The Commandant of Bitlis and the late Vali have left on their way to Erzinghan.

Inclosure 2 in No. 24.

Sir N. O'Conor to Vice-Consul Dickson.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, July 7, 1907.*

TROUBLES in Armenia. Your telegram of the 6th instant.

I think that it would be advisable that you should go to Mousb without delay and endeavour to obtain reliable information on the spot, if Tahir Pasha is still there and you think that the reports of atrocities in that district are worthy of credence.

You need not have any fear of the late Vali of Bitlis returning, but the length of Tahir Pasha's stay will probably depend on the situation at Bitlis.

If the situation at Van is causing you anxiety, I will instruct His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Diarbekir to proceed to Bitlis to take your place as soon as he can.

(Confidential.)

In carrying out my previous instructions, you should take care that any action you may take should not be interpreted as an encouragement to the Armenian revolutionaries. You should make it clear that we do not sympathize with them, inasmuch as their object is to stir up disorders and anarchy in the hope of bringing about diplomatic intervention, but that the safeguarding of the peaceful inhabitants from oppression is our only object.

[22364] No. 25.

Memorandum communicated to Count Benckendorff, July 12, 1907.

WITH reference to the Memorandum communicated to the Russian Ambassador on the 27th ultimo on the subject of the situation at Bitlis, a further telegram has been received from Sir N. O'Conor to the effect that M. Zenoview has urged the French Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople to send the French Consul from Bitlis to Erzeroum.

Sir N. O'Conor, in conversation with his Russian and French colleagues, expressed his opinion that any action having the appearance of a diplomatic demonstration would be most undesirable and liable to an interpretation by the Armenians that the Armenian question was again being raised with the probable result of intervention by the Powers. His Excellency stated his conviction that, unless the Governments interested were prepared, if necessary, to go much further than, he imagined, any of them contemplated, a meeting of the Consuls of the three vilayets to examine the situation would be unwise and unjustifiable. His Excellency added that, while in their efforts to protect the peaceful inhabitants from oppression, Russia and France would have the fullest co-operation of His Majesty's Government, it would be cruel to raise hopes which could not be realized.

[23252] No. 26.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 13.)

India Office, July 12, 1907.

Sir,

I AM directed by Mr. Secretary Morley to inclose, to be submitted to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy as to the behaviour of the local Turkish authorities at Katif towards the Commander of His Majesty's ship "Lapwing," when he visited that place with a view to concerting action with the Kaïmakam against the notorious pirate Ahmed-bin-Selman, who was reported to be encamped in the desert not far from Katif.

In view of the communication to the Porte reported in Mr. Barclay's despatch of the 21st September, 1906, as to the co-operation of the Ottoman authorities with the officers of the British ship then in pursuit of Ahmed-bin-Selman, Mr. Morley would suggest that His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople should be instructed to call the attention of the Turkish Government to the action of the local authorities, which amounted practically to sheltering the pirate, and to press on them the necessity of taking effective measures against piracy by land in concert with His Majesty's ships operating by sea, and of affording every facility to British officers when so employed.

I am, &c.

(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure in No. 26.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Secret.)

(Telegraphic.) *July 7, 1907.*

PIRACIES, Persian Gulf. Please see correspondence ending with Mr. Barclay's letter of the 21st September, 1906, to Foreign Office.

Following from Cox of the 24th June:—

"In pursuance of information reported in paragraph 1,148, Residency Diary for the 9th June, I asked Senior Naval Officer if he saw no objection to arrangement for ship to visit Katif and have friendly interview with Kaïmakam, and ascertain news of pirate and as to what steps were being taken to check him.

"'Lapwing' proceeded accordingly, and on the 21st June Commander and Lieutenant landed to call on Kaïmakam, but were stopped at gate of town by Turkish port officer and Customs officer, who insolently told them that Kaïmakam would not

see them, and that they had no right to land without permission of higher authorities. They furthermore refused to take any message to Kaïmakam, and hustled the two officers. Commander considers they were undoubtedly acting under direct orders of Kaïmakam, who was said to be in his house close by, and their attitude was so hostile that Commander re-embarked and returned here to report.

"I beg that Embassy may be asked to take action before any factitious counter-complaint reaches Constantinople."

Diary cited sent with Foreign Secretary's letter of the 5th July. Purport is that news was received at Bahrein that Ahmed-bin-Selman was encamped in desert not far from Katif. Political Agent, Bahrein, communicated report to Katif. Action of local Turkish officers will no doubt be suitably noticed by His Majesty's Government. It is in striking contrast to the freedom accorded to Turkish officers, soldiers, and mails in Bahrein Protectorate.

[23323] No. 27.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 15.)

(No. 411.)

Constantinople, July 10, 1907.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 394 of the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from the Dragoman in charge of His Majesty's Vice-Consulate at Bitlis reporting on the recent rising of the Mussulman population of that town.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 27.

Mr. Safrastian to Consul Shipley.

Bitlis, June 25, 1907.

Sir,

WITH reference to my telegrams of the 23rd and 24th instant, I have the honour to report that a very serious rising of the Mussulman population of Bitlis, directed specially against the personality of the Vali, took place on the Saturday morning of the 22nd instant. The event, important in itself, and perhaps far-reaching in its consequences, was extremely unexpected, there being apparently no imminent signs of it.

The carelessness of Ferid Pasha in presence of the general misery of Mussulmans as well as of Armenians; the high prices of grain owing, lately at least, to the insecurity of roads; the emigration of Mussulmans and Armenians by hundreds; the postponement of the rebuilding of fallen and shaken houses by the Imperial grant of £T. 1,300; the forcible pulling down of houses of poor men for the widening of roads. These and such reasons seem to have prompted the outbreak of the popular impatience in such a rude manner.

The prevailing drought threatened to destroy the crops. On this pretence the Vali invited, on Friday, the 21st, both peoples to hold public prayers for the falling of rain. After the prayers the Mussulmans had held secret meetings, presided over by sheikhs, and had sworn on their religion and their marriage ("nikah") not to withdraw their resolution of self-sacrifice until the fulfilment of their desires and demands.

The Vali dined at the Russian Consulate on the same evening, without having perhaps the least idea as to what was being plotted against him in the town. In the night a mob was formed in the houses of sheikhs, and long petitions drawn up against the misdeeds of Ferid Pasha to be dispatched to the Imperial Palace, the signatures of some native Mussulman notables being taken by force.

On the Saturday morning of the 22nd, the mob reassembled in public places and cemeteries to hear the last instructions of sheikhs. All Armenians were ordered to shut the market; Mussulman notables and some civil officials were dragged out of their houses to join the mob, which was getting in this way thicker and the Kur Sheikh Mehmed harangued the mob. At least 5,000 men and youths, armed with sticks and

knives, and in a few cases with revolvers, proceeded to the wooden baraque of the Vali, having already destroyed the young willows planted by Ferid Pasha.

At the sight of the furious mob the guards of the Vali, twenty gendarmes and aides-de-camp, escaped at once, leaving thus the Vali completely defenceless. It is said that Ferid Pasha required the protection of regular troops, but Military Commandant Djelal Pasha refused it, arguing that with the few troops he possessed he was to defend the arm depôts and the barracks.

The mob attacked soon the baraque of the Vali, led by Sheikh Mehmed, of Kadri, Sheikh Ibrahim, &c., and began to smash down the baraque. A Chief of Police of Pera, Armenak Zeki (Armenian Catholic), whom the Vali had brought with himself three years ago, was ruthlessly stabbed at the door of the baraque and the corpse thrown under a bridge. Ferid Pasha was then dragged out of the door, under strokes and a rain of stones and sticks, very coarsely insulted, and tortured at the hands of the violent mob. In the riot which followed, a Moslem was killed (the Vali is accused of this murder by the mob).

The Vali abandoned himself to the mercy of the sheikhs and Djelal Pasha, who had arrived already with some officers and soldiers. In view of madness of the mob the life of the Vali was at stake; a Sheikh is said to have untied his green turban and thrown it on the head of the Vali. From the baraque to the barracks, a distance of 200 yards, the Vali was taken, in the bedroom dress, almost half dead and unable to walk, on the arms of officers and followed by the furious mob, which made everything to insult him as much as possible. In the barracks his blood-stained face was washed, the two wounds on the head were attended to, and slightly dislocated left arm cared for.

In ten minutes the baraque was entirely plundered—£T. 1,000, obligations, receipts of bank, precious furniture, uniform, provisions, and everything, even the planks of the baraque were carried away—without any quarrel among the mob.

The mob seized then the telegraph office, and telegraphed direct to the Imperial Palace at Constantinople, requesting first the removal of Ferid Pasha.

In the course of the day the Council of sheikhs and notables dispatched telegram after telegram to the Imperial Palace, stating all the tyrannies and "misdeeds" of the Vali. So far, however, they have received nothing in answer. Three telegrams in cypher arrived only, addressed to Ferid Pasha, which were naturally torn to pieces by the Council and not delivered to him.

On the second day, however, Zeki Pasha, the Commander of the 4th Army Corps, telegraphed in reply to the mob to the effect that, in order to avoid the Imperial wrath, the mob must disperse itself, that troops have been started from the neighbouring vilayets to repress the revolt and keep the order.

All is quiet in the town. Armenians are well treated, and defended by the orders of sheikhs. The market is closed and business stopped, any opened shop being certainly plundered.

At the strict silence kept by the central Government at Constantinople the mob is beginning to show signs of discouragement and disappointment. At the last moment the news of the immediate arrival of Ferik Mahmoud Pasha, Military Commandant at Van, with a battalion, is causing a great uneasiness in the mob. It is therefore difficult to foresee the eventualities which may happen in the course of the few following days.

The telegrams of the Russian Consul and of mine were not dispatched on the first day by the mob. It was on our insistence that they were sent off on the afternoon of the second day.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARSHAG S. SAFRASTIAN,
Dragoman.

[23324] No. 28.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 15.)

(No. 412.)
Sir, *Therapia, July 10, 1907.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 408 of the 8th instant, I have the honour to report that I have received a further telegram from Captain Dickson from Bitlis, reporting that Tahir Pasha had arrived, and that he had had a friendly conversation

with his Excellency respecting the state of affairs in the Bitlis Vilayet, the Pasha appearing anxious to improve matters and to welcome his assistance.

Captain Dickson hears from the French Vice-Consul at Van that things there are satisfactory, and is therefore remaining at Bitlis for the present. He has drawn up, in concert with his Russian colleague, a list of suggestions for communication to Tahir Pashir, when his Excellency is ready to consider them, which embody the instructions reported to you in my despatch No. 407 of the 8th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[23325] No. 29.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 15.)

(No. 413.)
Sir, *Therapia, July 10, 1907.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 85 of the 7th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of the communication which I received on the 2nd instant from the Russian Ambassador, who is acting as Doyen of the Diplomatic Body, announcing the selection by the Sultan of Youssouf Bey for the post of Governor of the Lebanon.

At a meeting of Ambassadors held yesterday, when the Minister for Foreign Affairs was also present, we unanimously agreed to accept the nomination of Youssouf Bey, and, in accordance with the precedent of 1902, signed a Protocol to that effect, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 29.

M. Zinoview to Sir N. O'Conor.

Ambassade Impériale de Russie, Constantinople,
le 19 Juin (2 Juillet), 1907.

M. l'Ambassadeur et cher Collègue,

SON Excellence Naoum Pacha est venu me voir hier pour m'annoncer que Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan a bien voulu choisir pour le poste de Gouverneur du Liban Youssouf Bey, Chef du Cabinet du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, et il m'a exprimé l'espoir que ce choix sera agréé par les Puissances.

En portant ce qui précède à votre connaissance, je saisis, &c.

(Signé) I. ZINOVIEW.

Inclosure 2 in No. 29.

Protocol respecting the Appointment of Youssouf Bey as Governor of the Lebanon

LE poste du Gouverneur-Général du Liban étant devenu vacant par suite du décès de Mouzaffer Pacha, Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan a daigné nommer à ce poste Youssouf Bey, Chef du Cabinet du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères.

Les Représentants des Puissances Signataires des Règlements Organiques et des Protocoles du Liban, réunis en conférence avec le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, sont unanimes pour constater par le présent Protocole l'entente préalable qui, à l'occasion de cette nomination, s'est établie entre eux et la Sublime Porte.

Le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères et les Représentants des Puissances déclarent maintenir la clause des Protocoles des 15 Août, 1892, 14 Août, 1897, et 27 Septembre, 1902, qui fixe à cinq ans la durée des pouvoirs du Gouverneur, ainsi que toutes les

autres dispositions contenues dans lesdits Actes et dans les Protocoles des 27 Juillet, 1878, 22 Avril, 1873, et 8 Mai, 1883.

En foi de quoi les Plénipotentiaires respectifs ont signé le présent Protocol et y ont apposé leurs sceaux.

Fait à Constantinople le 9 Juillet, 1907.

(Signé) I. ZINOVIEW.
N. R. O'CONOR.
IMPÉRIALI.
PALLAVICINI.
KIDERLEN.
A. BOPPE.

(Signé) TEWFIK.

[23252] No. 30.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 287.) *Foreign Office, July 19, 1907.*

Sir,

WITH reference to Mr. Barclay's despatch No. 651 of the 21st September, 1906, I transmit to your Excellency herewith a copy of a letter from the India Office,[2] inclosing telegraphic correspondence with the Viceroy respecting the behaviour of the local Ottoman authorities at Katif towards the Commander of His Majesty's ship "Lapwing," when he visited that place with a view to concerting action with the Kaimakam against the notorious pirate Ahmed-bin-Selman.

I have to instruct your Excellency to draw the serious attention of the Ottoman Government to the discourtesy of the local officials, whose action practically amounted to sheltering the pirate, and to express the hope that immediate and categorical instructions may be issued with a view to the prevention of similar incidents in the future.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

[24298] No. 31.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 416.) *Therapia, July 13, 1907.*

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 407 of the 4th instant, I have the honour to transmit copy of a further despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, inclosing a report from Mr. Safrastian on the alleged excesses committed on Armenians in the Moush Plain.

These hearsay reports should of course be taken with reserve until further details are received from Captain Dickson.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 31.

Consul Shipley to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 39.) *Erzeroum, July 1, 1907.*

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Excellency herewith copy of a further despatch which I have received from Mr. Safrastian, Dragoman-in-charge of His Majesty's Vice-Consulate at Bitlis, confirming in the main lines the reports of the

excesses alleged to have been committed on Armenians in the Moush Plain referred to by him in his despatch of the 18th ultimo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 31.

Mr. Safrastian to Consul Shipley.

Bitlis, June 25, 1907.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 18th instant, I have the honour to report that the excesses reported to be in operation in the Plain of Moush are confirmed in the main lines.

From the statements of some trustworthy travellers it is understood that many women and children were butchered in Soulukh after the fighting on the 9th instant. Children in cradles have been thrown into the River of Murad; pregnant women are tortured, men are beheaded, &c. Ten Armenians are reported killed in Akjan, a few in Tzeronk, Koms, and Tcherig. Villagers who had gone out to water fields or reap the hay have been shot dead. Four Hamidié regiments are stated to be pursuing the revolutionary leader Kovork, who is certainly living now, at the head of his band. Various robberies have been done in the neighbouring villages by Hamidié and other Kurds.

According to the reports of the last three days, it is understood that about twenty Armenians were killed in the town of Moush. "Djanbezars" (blackguards) have profited from the condition of affairs, and have killed or wounded them in the outskirts of the town. Thanks to the efforts of the new Mutessarif, Savfet Pasha, however the peace has re-established soon [*sic*], except that the shops are said to be closed still.

I have, &c.
[Unsigned.]

[24299] No. 32.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 417.) *Therapia, July 13, 1907.*

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 408 of the 8th instant, I have the honour to report that on the 11th instant I received a telegram from Captain Dickson, of which a paraphrase is inclosed, containing a list of the suggestions for reform which he intended to make to Tahir Pasha.

The project, however, seemed to me too large to put forward in the present circumstances and likely to provoke opposition, whereas if Captain Dickson's demands were limited to the essential points which called for immediate redress, there was a good chance of his representations being attended with success. I therefore sent him a telegram in reply in that sense, of which a paraphrase is also inclosed.

I communicated this correspondence to my Russian colleague, who shared my views of the situation, and at once sent instructions to the Russian Consul similar to those with which I had furnished Captain Dickson.

I have to-day received a further telegram from Captain Dickson, who reports that Tahir Pasha gave a most favourable reception to his suggestions, and agreed that they were all within the duty of the Turkish authorities, but in case he should refuse some of the suggestions Captain Dickson and his Russian colleague intend to limit themselves in further discussions with Tahir Pasha to the special points which I mentioned.

Captain Dickson proposes to go to Moush after his interview with Tahir Pasha, and from there return again to Bitlis.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 32.

Vice-Consul Dickson to Sir N. O'Conor.

Bitlis, July 9, 1907.

(Telegraphic.) P.

I PROPOSE to make following suggestions verbally to Tahir Pasha to-morrow, and if he receives them favourably, and your Excellency approves, I will give him a copy in writing later:—

I.

1. Measures for the alleviation of position of Christian villagers.
2. Protection of life and property from the Kurds and Circassians.
3. Prevention of dispossession of Christians from their land to make room for Moslem immigrants.
4. Prevention of Moslems establishing themselves in Christian villages.
5. Officials to listen to complaints of the people and of their religious representatives, and to give them protection according to law.
6. Election of strong and honest Kaimakams for ten districts chiefly oppressed.
7. Prohibition of irresponsible Acting Kaimakams holding such posts.
8. Prevention of outrages by Kurds after troops have been sent to search for revolutionaries.
9. Troops posted in villages to protect them to be punished when they do not interfere to prevent Kurds from oppressing villagers.
10. Churches and monasteries not to be occupied.

II.

1. Taxes to be collected according to law.
2. Clearly printed taxpapers and receipts to be used.
3. Complaints of abuses to be investigated, and if correctly reported culprits to be punished.
4. Poor people not to be maltreated and compelled to pay taxes.
5. Articles of prime necessity not to be taken.
6. Articles given for relief not to be taken.
7. Prohibition of making poor people pay by system called "selef." If villager has no other means of paying, payment to be deferred till after harvest.
8. Christian villages to buy their own taxes according to price of last five years.
9. Officials to be held responsible for these suggestions being carried out in their districts.

III.

Sixteen officials and brigands mentioned by name to be punished.

IV.

Women taken by Moslems to be returned. Goods stolen by Kurds to be restored after official inquiry.

Inclosure 2 in No. 32.

Sir N. O'Conor to Vice-Consul Dickson.

Therapia, July 11, 1907.

(Telegraphic.) P.

BEFORE commenting on the suggestions given in your telegram of the 9th instant, I wish to learn what Tahir Pasha says to your verbal communication. You would, I think, do well to omit any of the suggestions which are covered by existing Laws and Regulations or are not of first importance. Thus in Part I, I would omit Nos. 1, 5, 6, and 7, and in Part II, Nos. 3, 4, 6, 7, and 9. If you confine your efforts to the redress of flagrant abuses you will, I am sure, obtain more than from pressing the whole list.

The points on which I should lay stress would be the protection of the peaceful inhabitants, the prevention of Moslem immigrants being settled on the lands of Christians, and the prevention of outrages by the Hamidieh.

Opposition would certainly be provoked in high quarters by the presentation of something resembling a general reform scheme.

[24300] No. 33.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 418.) *Therapia, July 15, 1907.*

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 413 of the 10th instant, I have the honour to inclose herewith copy of the official version of the Protocol signed by the Representatives of the Six Powers and the Ottoman Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 8th instant, relative to the appointment of Youssouf Bey to the post of Governor of the Lebanon.

We agreed to a slight textual modification of the last paragraph of the Protocol in respect of the references therein contained to previous instruments concerning the Lebanon, and the copy of the Protocol herewith inclosed should be regarded as replacing that forwarded in my above-mentioned despatch, and which was erroneously described as having been signed on the 9th instant.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 33.

Protocol respecting the Appointment of Youssouf Bey to the Post of Governor of the Lebanon.

LE poste de Gouverneur du Liban étant devenu vacant par suite du décès de Munzaffer Pacha, Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan a daigné nommer à ce poste Youssouf Bey, Chef du Cabinet du Ministre des Affaires Etrangères.

Les Représentants des Puissances Signataires des Règlements Organiques et des Protocoles du Liban, réunis en conférence avec le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, sont unanimes pour constater par le présent Protocole l'entente préalable qui, à l'occasion de cette nomination, s'est établie entre eux et la Sublime Porte.

Le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères et les Représentants des Puissances déclarent maintenir la clause des Protocoles des 15 Août, 1892, 14 Août, 1897, et 27 Septembre, 1902, qui fixe à cinq ans la durée des pouvoirs du Gouverneur, ainsi que toutes les autres dispositions et références contenues dans les dits Actes.

En foi de quoi les Plénipotentiaires respectifs ont signé le présent Protocole et y ont apposé leurs sceaux.

Fait à Constantinople, le 8 Juillet, 1907.

(L.S.) TEWFIK.
(L.S.) T. ZINOVIEW.
(L.S.) N. R. O'CONOR.
(L.S.) IMPERIALI.
(L.S.) PALLAVICINI.
(L.S.) KIDERLEN.
(L.S.) A. BOPPE.

[24305] No. 34.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 423.) *Constantinople, July 17, 1907*

Sir,

WITH reference to recent correspondence and to my despatch No. 130 of the 27th February, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from Mr. Shipley, His Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, on the subject of the political situation in that

town, and inclosing extract of a letter from Mr. Safrastian, dragoman at His Majesty's Vice-Consulate at Bitlis, on the subject of the recent rising there.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 34.

Consul Shipley to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 38. Confidential.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, July* 1, 1907.

AS your Excellency will not have failed to notice from the report of Mr. Safrastian of the 25th instant, forwarded by me to your Excellency in my despatch No. 37 of the 29th of the same month, the recent rising at Bitlis therein referred to was, he states, "specially directed against the personality of the Vali."

It is possibly to the above fact, which appears to have been well understood from the first by the Erzeroum Mussulmans, to whom the unpopularity of Ferid Pasha had for some time past been no secret, that the undoubted lack of excitement with which, as reported to your Excellency in my telegram of the 29th instant, the news of the rising was received by them may be due. I should, however, wish to guard against conveying to your Excellency the idea that the affair was allowed by the Mussulmans to pass without comment, or that it may be taken as an indication that the revolutionary spirit among the latter has suffered any abatement. Matters, outwardly at least, continue to be quiet, but the organization to which I referred in my despatch No. 5 of the 15th February last has lost none of its activity, and the extent to which it has become a recognized institution is shown by the fact that its adherents are now openly spoken of as members of the "Comité." A further very serious feature in the situation is that indications are not wanting that the Mussulmans, encouraged by the success which has attended their efforts to procure the repeal of the obnoxious taxes which were the immediate cause of the original demonstration, have now apparently become so persuaded of the weakness of the central authority as to scarcely conceal their determination not to submit to the imposition of further taxation at all unless their own consent, or that of their representatives, has been previously obtained. I may mention, as an instance of this, that the new Law on the "temettu," or tax on professions and trades, has already been discussed by them in a sense neither favourable nor respectful, and that the belief at Erzeroum is very general that, should an attempt be made to apply its provisions to this vilayet, serious trouble will ensue.

Although under these circumstances the outlook can hardly be said to be promising for the Government, I find, nevertheless, that owing largely to the influence and prestige which the present Governor-General, Nouri Bey, has acquired with the Mussulmans, due to his personal honesty and the ability hitherto shown by him in the administration of affairs, fears are not entertained of any further immediate outbreak of disorder, unless, indeed, the contingency above referred to should arise. In such a case, and bearing in mind the steadfastness of purpose of the Mussulmans, to which I alluded in my despatch No. 15 of the 30th March last, it would, I venture to think, be very doubtful whether this personal influence would suffice to restrain the population, and he himself is, in fact, credited by the latter with the intention of resigning rather than risk the fate of his predecessors by attempting to enforce an unpopular measure unless previously assured of effective support.

From the accompanying extract from a private letter which I have received from Mr. Safrastian, your Excellency will notice that the recent rising at Bitlis had this in common with that at Erzeroum of last October, insomuch as in neither case was any appreciable effort made by the military to restrain the violence of the mob. At Bitlis, however, as at Erzeroum, it is satisfactory to note that protection was afforded to the Christians by the Mussulmans, and in this connection I am able to report to your Excellency that, as far as this city is concerned, I have observed no sign of any change in the friendly attitude of the latter towards their Christian fellow-townsmen to which I have frequently referred in previous despatches.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 34.

Extract from Private Letter from Mr. Safrastian to Consul Shipley, dated June 25, 1907.

"ENTRE nous," I dare to state that Djelab Pasha (the Commandant) and military authorities in general did not do what they ought to do for the protection of the Vali. It is possible that the future inquiry of the case will lay one part of the responsibility on the shoulders of the soldiers or their commandants.

All higher officials took refuge in the barracks. I forgot to say the gendarmerie Major was beaten by the mob and hardly escaped from their hands.

[24306] No. 35.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 424.) *Constantinople, July* 17, 1907.
Sir,

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch which His Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum has received from Mr. Shordone, who in the absence of Captain Dickson is in charge of His Majesty's Vice-Consulate at Van, giving an account of a recent fight between revolutionaries.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 35.

Acting Vice-Consul Shordone to Consul Shipley.

Van, le 24 *Juin*, 1907.
Monsieur,

J'AI l'honneur de vous faire savoir qu'une bande révolutionnaire forte d'environ huit personnes ayant été signalée dans les environs de Varag, située à une heure de Van, une compagnie d'infanterie, dix hommes de la cavalerie et de nombreux gendarmes ont été envoyés contre eux; il y a eu des échanges de coups de fusil, un lieutenant de gendarmerie a été tué, ainsi qu'un paysan Arménien.

Les révolutionnaires ont pris la fuite dans les montagnes.

Jusqu'à présent la population est calme; mais à Mouch et à Bitlis il se passe, dit-on, des événements graves. Le Général de Division de Van doit partir aujourd'hui même avec un bataillon d'infanterie.

Je vous prie, si vous le jugez nécessaire, de communiquer ces faits à l'Ambassade.

(Signé) G. SBORDONE.

[24307] No. 36.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 425.) *Constantinople, July* 17, 1907.
Sir,

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from Sir R. Drummond-Hay, His Majesty's Consul-General at Beirout, reporting the funeral of Moazzam Pasha, late Governor of the Lebanon.

I have, &c.
Signed N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 36.

Consul-General Sir R. Drummond-Hay to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 58.) *Beirout, July* 4, 1907.
Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that the funeral of the late Moazzam Pasha took place on the 29th June, and was largely attended by officials and notables belonging to Beirout and the Lebanon. The streets and buildings were also densely crowded by

many thousands who seriously impeded the progress of the procession. The remains were conveyed, after the religious ceremony in the Church of the Capucins, to the mortuary chapel of the Latin cemetery with a view to ship them shortly to Constantinople for final interment, but the same night they were secretly transferred to the care of the Jesuit Fathers, who undertook to place the coffin temporarily in a vault on their own premises. This was a precautionary measure taken by friends of the deceased owing to the fact that the coffin of the late Wasa Pasha was desecrated while lying in the same chapel awaiting removal to his tomb in the Lebanon.

The Emir Kabelan Bellama has received his appointment as Acting Governor-General, a step that is giving entire satisfaction. The members of the Administrative Council have received a *congé* of two weeks, and will then reassemble in Bettidine. Provided that the members of the Council continue to work in harmony, there is every prospect of the district remaining tranquil.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. HAY DRUMMOND-HAY.

[24310] No. 37.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 428.)
Sir, *Constantinople, July 18, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch which I have addressed to His Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout on the subject of a conversation which I had yesterday with Youssouf Pasha.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 37.

Sir N. O'Conor to Consul-General Sir R. Drummond Hay.

Sir, *Therapia, July 18, 1907.*

YOUSSOUF PASHA, the newly-appointed Vali of the Lebanon, who is starting to-day for Beyrout, dined with me last night, and in the course of the evening I had a long conversation with his Excellency.

I urged upon him the necessity of maintaining the strictest impartiality in his administration, and of respecting the special rights and privileges enjoyed by his province. Any deviation from this course would, I said, bring trouble not only upon him, but on the whole Franco family. I had heard reports, to which I did not myself attach credence, but which were still very circumstantial, as to the influence used at the Palace to secure his appointment as Vali. I trusted that, however this might be, he would be careful to observe absolute justice in the Lebanon.

Youssouf Pasha thanked me for what I had said, and assured me that his policy would be guided by the principles which I had indicated, and that he would do his utmost to give full effect to them. He earnestly hoped that he would have your warm co-operation, and that you would speak to him with all frankness in regard to any matters of complaint which came to your notice.

I am, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[24185] No. 38.

Count de Salis to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 324.)
Sir, *Berlin, July 16, 1907.*

IN the month of April Sir Frank Lascelles received a telegram from Sir N. O'Conor inquiring whether his Excellency would give him any news regarding a certain Dr. Hugo Grothe, who was reported to be travelling about in the neighbourhood of Bagdad, and who was suspected of being engaged in prospecting petroleum. Sir Frank Lascelles was unable to obtain any particulars regarding Dr. Grothe in Berlin, so he

inquired of Mr. Cartwright whether he could learn anything on the subject at Munich. Mr. Cartwright wrote to Sir Frank Lascelles saying that he was unable to learn anything specific regarding Dr. Grothe, but from what he could gather he had gone to Bagdad on a scientific mission alone, as on previous occasions he had gone to Tripoli, and that he was not in the proper sense of the word the representative of any firm. Subsequently some information regarding Dr. Grothe's movements appeared in the "Frankfort Gazette," and this Mr. Cartwright had the honour of reporting to you in his despatch No. 56 of the 1st ultimo. Recently a letter from the Doctor has appeared in the "Kölnische Zeitung," in which he gives a description of a journey undertaken by him in a south-westerly direction from Bagdad to Hillah and thence to Nedjef and Kerbela, of which I have the honour to inclose a Memorandum herewith.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. DE SALIS.

Inclosure in No. 38.

Memorandum on Dr. Grothe's Journey from Bagdad to Hillah, &c.

FLOODS such as have not taken place for twenty years made Dr. Grothe's journey to Hillah somewhat difficult. He found Hillah to be in a decaying condition; a few years ago the town contained some 30,000–38,000 persons, but the cholera which raged there in 1904 has reduced the population almost by half. The Sultan possesses considerable lands in the district of Hillah, and two years ago the Imperial Civil List voted several hundred thousand pounds towards the improvement of the Hindié dam —a work of engineering—the object of which is to cause a proper supply of water to fill the arm of the Euphrates flowing through Babylon and Hillah, which at present is dry for more than half the year. A French engineer, at a salary of 10,000 fr. a-month, was employed to draw up a plan for the proposed works, but nothing has been under-taken so far, as the plans are under consideration at Constantinople. The Doctor complains that the Imperial Civil List have sent another French engineer, at a salary of £T. 100 per month, to study the question, but he remains inactive. All the engineers are Frenchmen, including the engineer of the vilayet and the one employed by the urban authorities of Hillah.

The Doctor found that the maps of Babylonia were very indifferent, and he recommends the survey of the country to a German scientific expedition. The matter is one which concerns Germany particularly in view of the commercial interests she will acquire there through the Bagdad Railway.

The traveller gives a glowing description of the possible wealth of Mesopotamia. The Turks are not wanting in the will to exploit the wealth of the country but in the means, and he cites their action in the districts traversed by the Anatolian Railway to prove that they are ready to assist in the development of the country as soon as they receive the requisite stimulus. Dr. Grothe complains that the Germans have done scarcely anything to develop Mesopotamia. He says any one who visits the country must ask himself why all the political levers are not put in motion in order to make use of the Concessions granted for railroad construction, in a land which above all others is in a position to yield good profits. A route from Khanikin viâ Bagdad, Kerbela, and Nedjef to the Persian Gulf, would serve the oversea traffic, would increase the importance of Bagdad as a centre for Persian trade, and would besides derive a rich income from the pilgrim traffic to Kerbela and Nedjef and also to Mecca. The letter which I have the honour to bring to your notice was written from Bagdad, so it is to be presumed that Dr. Grothe has returned there from Nedjef and Kerbela. If it is to be presumed that he intends to travel to Tehran, he may do so by the Sadijé–Khanikin route. In this event, his account of the journey will be interesting in view of the report which appeared in the "Standard" that the Germans had obtained a Concession to build a railway from Bagdad to Tehran. As regards this rumour and the reported Concession to the Germans to construct a branch line to Hillah and Kerbela, it would appear that Dr. Grothe's Report bears out the language of Herr Test and Dr. von Schwabach, as represented in Sir F. Lascelles' despatch No. 266 of the 10th ultimo.

(Signed) CRANLEY.

Berlin, July 16, 1907.

[24367] No. 39.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 22.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 16th instant, relative to the attitude of the Sheikh of Koweit towards the tribes in the interior.

India Office, July 20, 1907.

Inclosure in No. 39.

Mr. Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, July* 16, 1907.

YOUR telegram of the 21st ultimo.

Your view that it would be inadvisable, in existing circumstances, to issue to Sheikh of Koweit further warnings in regard to his attitude towards tribes is approved by His Majesty's Government.

[24415] No. 40.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 22.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 20th July, relative to affairs in the Yemen.

India Office, July 22, 1907.

Inclosure in No. 40.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P. *July* 20, 1907.

HIS Majesty's Vice-Consul, Hodeida, telegraphs to following effect as to Yemen affairs :—

"I received several days ago [report], which is probably correct, of capture of Rada. Great activity appears to prevail amongst scattered bands of insurgents throughout Yemen. Rebels have occupied Hifash mountain position north-east of Hodeida. Taweela is rumoured to have fallen. Trouble in Eastern Yemen is serious, districts of Otma and Osab-el-Ali having fallen."

In telegram of the 13th July, Resident at Aden states that reports had reached him that Imam forces were nearing Kataba. Diary for week ended the 26th May last of Political Officer, Dthala, refers to communications taking place between Imam and Sultan of Abdali. Imam's boundary will march with ours, in the event of his securing autonomy of Upper Yemen, and early consideration will have to be given to question of nature and channel of communications with him. No reply has, so far, been made to any of the advances made by him. Difficulties in our hinterland may be engendered by his success against Turks. Action is no doubt being taken to give effect to your orders for the evacuation of Dthala, which have been duly communicated.

[24787] No. 41.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 25.)

Sir, *India Office, July* 24, 1907.

IN reply to your letter of the 13th instant, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Morley to state that he concurs in the terms of the Memorandum which the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs proposes to address to the French Ambassador, accepting the reservations of the French Government as to the points still under discussion in connection with the Muscat Arbitration Award.

Mr. Morley would suggest that the French Government should at the same time be asked to agree that a separate list of dhows owned by French citizens as well as a list of persons entitled to fly the French flag should be furnished annually to the British Consul by the French Consul, similar lists being furnished by the British Consul to the French Consul.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[24952] No. 42.

War Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 27.)

(Secret.)

THE Director of Military Operations presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and begs to forward, for his information, a copy of a Report on the Hejaz Railway, with three maps,* compiled by Major F. R. Maunsell, C.M.G., R.A., who has recently returned from a reconnaissance in Syria. One copy of the Report will be sent to the Military Attaché, His Britannic Majesty's Embassy, Constantinople.

War Office, July 26, 1907.

Inclosure in No. 42.

Report on the Hejaz Railway by Major Maunsell, R.A., dated July 1907.

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* Not printed.

1. The Hejaz Railway.

General Progress of the Line.

In May 1907 the main line was open for general traffic as far as Tebuk (693 kilom. from Damascus), and construction trains were running at that time to Kelaat-i-Akhdar (761 kilom.).

Work has been retarded owing to the construction of a tunnel of 180 metres near Akhdar, and a bridge of twenty arches over the Wadi-Atsel, but these are now open for traffic, and the laying of the rails is being actively pushed beyond Akhdar.

Various parties, comprising altogether 5,000 military workmen, organized into five battalions, of which two are special railway battalions, are engaged between Akhdar and Medain-i-Salih.

There are also some 450 Italian, Greek, Montenegrin, and other Christian workmen, who construct station buildings, bridges, tunnels, and other more difficult labour, soldier labour being confined to simple earthwork, cuttings, and the laying of the permanent way.

Efforts have been made to instruct soldiers in masonry bridge work, with some success, as a special bridging company can now construct culverts up to 10 feet.

The Medina garrison, comprising some 3,000 men, has recently commenced earthwork from Medina, under superintendence of Turkish Engineer officers, but no bridge work has been attempted, or rails laid.

It will probably be found impossible to dispense entirely with the Italian or European workmen and contractors, and they will carry on their part of the work right up to Medina, or even Mecca.

Tebuk, which has a plentiful water supply, is being made into a large depôt, similar to Maan.

Another depôt will be made at El Ula (just south of Medain-i-Salih), a small town, with a plentiful water supply, and finally a depôt will be made in Medina.

All efforts are now being directed to reach Medina, and it is hoped in sixteen months' time, *i.e.*, in September 1908, the line will be completed thus far.

It is not proposed to at once continue the line from Medina to Mecca, but to complete other projects, such as the construction of a sheltered port at Haifa, the construction of the Jeddah–Mecca line for the use of the Indian pilgrims, and some short branches in Syria, which will be likely to pay and bring in revenue. When this programme has been carried out, the construction of the Medina–Mecca line will be considered further.

These proposals do not take into account the bitter hostility of the Arabs, and the possibility of an attack by Ibn Rashîd from Hail, which is only eight days' march from Akhdar or Muadhem, or by Ibn Saoud, the Emir of Nejd, both of whom see their independence threatened by the advance of the line. Even now work has been stopped temporarily at the Medina end, and several raids on the construction parties have been made near Akhdar by hostile Arabs, while individual soldiers, who stray but a short distance from their working parties, are robbed or killed.

Between Medina and Mecca the powerful tribe of the Beni Harb will not even permit of the construction of the telegraph between those places, much less the railway.

The policy of the Turks is to pay the various Sheikhs along the line an annual subsidy to prevent attacks by their tribesmen, and this serves fairly well for the large tribes of Adwan and Beni Sakhr between Damascus and Maan, but those farther south are more difficult to control, and have far more power of mischief.

Station buildings south of Tebuk are loopholed for defence, with a store of water and provisions to resist attack.

In this connection must be noted the very large and increasing importation of rifles in recent years into Syria and Arabia. The principal weapon thus imported is the Martini.

The Druzes, the people of the Hauran, the Lebanon, and the great Bedouin tribes south-east of Damascus, obtain rifles from Syrian ports, while the Bedouins of north-west Arabia get them in from numerous small inlets on the Red Sea coast.

The result of this has been that every Arab in the interior has his Martini with belt full of cartridges which he is able to refill from local resources, and thus finds himself as well armed as the Turkish troops.

This applies not only to Arabia, but also to the Hauran, the Lebanon, and the districts close round Damascus.

Arab raiding parties from the Shammar or Nejd can cover great distances, 60 to 70 miles in the day by mounting two men on a camel, and these might readily attack the scattered working parties on the railway, cut off the water supply, and destroy depôts before the slow moving infantry detachments could be concentrated.

Water being everything, and only found at long intervals, detachments would be in danger of perishing of thirst.

Military Organization of Construction Works.

The parties at railhead comprise three battalions of Nizam infantry and two railway battalions kept up to the full strength of 5,000 men by constant small drafts. These number 50 to 80 by each train, and do little more than replace the great wastage caused by sickness, the returning trains being crowded with sick from railhead.

The organization is by companies, each having a particular section allotted to it under its own officers.

The infantry do the ordinary earthwork, cuttings, embankments, &c.

Contractors and foreign workmen, Italians, Greeks, &c., do station buildings, bridges, culverts, tunnels, and difficult rock cuttings.

The railway battalions lay the actual permanent way of rails and sleepers.

Stone is plentiful all along the line, and is used for bridges and station buildings. Wood beams for roofing have to be imported through Haifa. Iron bridges or ironwork are not used at all now.

The Bedouin take no part whatever in the building of the line, but on the contrary are hostile, and cut off stragglers when they can.

The drafts usually wear their ordinary civilian clothes, and have received no military training; but their work on the line counts as military service, and they receive a certain amount of drill while there.

The railway battalions have become expert in the laying of the permanent way, and can average 2 to 3 kilom. a day, and have done even 4 kilom. on special occasions.

One company has been trained under European instructors in masonry work, and can now build culverts up to 10 feet.

The men now receive extra pay, in addition to their ordinary pay as soldiers, calculated by piece work at the following scale:

	Piastre.
1 cubic metre of earth	1
1 cubic metre of rock	2
Collecting 1 cubic metre of stones	2
Spreading 1 cubic metre on the railway	1

This is found more satisfactory than payment at military rates by the day. The extra pay is issued fairly regularly, and a man can accumulate a sum of 15*l.* or 20*l.* at the end of his period of three years, a satisfactory sum in this country, and an important inducement to recruits. This extra pay comes from the Hejaz Railway fund, while the military pay is issued by the administration of the Vth Army Corps at Damascus, and is usually very many months in arrear. South of Maan, all employés get an extra rate of pay; thus, for an ordinary workman on the permanent way this is 150 piastres a-month with other rates in proportion.

A special commissariat administration has been formed, with headquarters at Damascus, to supply the troops at railhead.

This becomes an increasingly difficult problem, as there appears no chance of procuring any supplies in the country itself.

Live sheep, for instance, have to be sent from Amman to Tebuk and the desert stations at railhead, a distance of nearly 300 miles, during which the animals suffer much and lose flesh.

The principal store depôt is now at Tebuk.

The food supplied is bread or biscuit ("peksemed,") rice and sugar, with meat only at rare intervals. The want of vegetables is severely felt. The actual quantity of provisions is just sufficient, but the quality of flour sent from Damascus is very bad.

Sickness is rife, dysentery, typhoid, and scurvy, brought on by the lack of green vegetables and want of suitable food when working hard in such a hot climate, are

prevalent. Green vegetables might be grown at Tebuk oasis, as the Italian engineers have proved, but nothing is done to supply the troops in this way.

As a contrast, the Italians and other foreign workmen support the climate well, their food being supplied by their own contractors.

Military hospitals of 150 beds are to be constructed at Tebuk and El Ula, and that at Tebuk is approaching completion.

There is a temporary hut hospital at Maan of 150 beds, while the worst cases are sent on to Damascus.

The sick are sent up the line in open platform waggons without medical attendance of any sort.

The Maan–Akaba route is always kept open for the passage of troops to embark at Akaba for the Yemen, and was being used this spring.

A special commissariat depôt is maintained in Maan, and one company of infantry with a post of zaptiehs is in garrison there. The present garrison of Akaba is one and a-half battalions of the Hejas Division, and three posts are maintained on the Akaba route of fifty men each, the distance being as follows :—

	Kilom.
Maan	—
Fuele	28
Guera	40
Abal Hairan	28
Akaba	20
Total	116

At Guera is a telegraph office and a larger post of eighty men.

The first stage to Fuele is a gradual ascent from Maan, the post being on the crest (4,625 feet). Several small springs exist in the vicinity, and Roman remains testify that the district was formerly inhabited. The second stage includes the very steep descent of an escarpment some 800 feet high—a continuation of the Batn-el-Ghrul.

Guera is in a wide and nearly waterless plain, and possesses a small spring near the post. A few shrubs and some vegetation exist here in spring.

The last stages are down the Wadi Ithm to Akaba, a valley about a mile wide with rocky sides in which a few small springs are found.

Feeling against Christian Employés.

Throughout the Administration there is a certain feeling of antagonism to Christian employés, and the idea obtains that the line should be worked entirely by Moslems.

This feeling is not exactly due to fanaticism, but rather to the conflict of Eastern methods with Western, and to a desire to get rid of Western influence, at any rate, in the Arabian sections.

In the Construction Department it is generally admitted that Meisner Pasha is indispensable, although he has not been permitted to survey farther south than Medain-i-Salih. Now, however, that his contract has been renewed he will doubtless be allowed to go south as construction advances.

Mukhtar Bey, whom I met at Deraa, has studied the country towards Medina, but scarcely seemed capable of any but a subordinate position.

In the Traffic Department, M. Gaudin (now Gaudin Pasha), although energetic, does not seem to have the same tact in dealing with the higher Turkish officials as Meisner Pasha ; several of his European assistants have resigned because their position was made intolerable and the Turkish subordinate officials would not carry out the orders of a Christian. Although M. Gaudin was, when first appointed, given full powers, he is now entirely under Riza Pasha, with whom he does not get on, and consequent confusion results.

The Turkish officials find their posts can be made very lucrative in many ways. Even booking clerks gain a good deal in such ways as refusing to find room for merchants' goods on the train unless heavily bribed.

The stations in the Hauran, whence a large export of wheat is possible, are still encumbered with piles of sacks of last year's wheat. Trains, even on the short run between Haifa and Damascus, are often hours late for no reason ; long, meaningless stoppages being made at every small station.

Turkish administrators seem incapable of grasping the idea of management and forethought required in working a railway.

There is practically no reserve of coal which all comes from oversea, mostly from Cardiff ; on one occasion the supply ran out owing to a steamer being late, and the line ceased working for forty-eight hours until coal was borrowed from the French line and the bunkers of a passing steamer. ;The extraordinary confusion at Deraa when trains arrive is another object lesson.

Moslem engine-drivers whose fatalistic ideas are unsuited to such a profession, and scamped workmanship on the part of Belgian and German engine making firms make the life of an engine a short one, perhaps four or five months at most before it has to go to the repairing shops ; certainly the works at Maan, Deraa, and Haifa are full of engines awaiting repairs brought on largely through ignorance and neglect. Some Christian drivers still remain and their number will probably have to be increased.

Terminus and Depôts and Repairing Shops.

New terminus and repairing works at Damascus.—It has now been decided that Damascus and not Deraa shall be the head-quarters of the Administration of the line with the principal repairing shops at Kadem-i-Sherif where the present Damascus station is.

A large terminal station with offices is to be built in the principal square near the new Government Serai overlooking the Wadi Barada. The present Kadem station is to be retained and the line continued to the new terminus passing close to the Maidan and Beramke stations of the French line.

On the site of the Old Serai in the principal square is now under construction a hotel to contain 150 rooms, a fine stone building with every modern comfort to attract tourists.

The workshops and repairing works are now partly completed just east of the present Kadem Station.

The machinery has been ordered from Baume and Marpent, Haine St. Pierre, Belgium, but has not yet arrived.

It will be worked by electric power supplied by the Tramway Company (Belgian Concession) which has its power station at Ain-el-Fije, above the town, supplying both the tramways and electric light of the town.

These will be the principal construction and repairing works for the line.

In addition, smaller repairing works are to be made at

Deraa,	El Ula,
Maan,	Medina,
Tebuk,	Haifa.

At Deraa and Maan they are complete, and at Haifa are approaching completion

At Tebuk they have only recently been commenced, and will not be completed for some time.

Tebuk and El Ula have been selected by virtue of their good water supply.

Centre of Administration and Depôts.—Thus the centre of administration, with the chief repairing and construction works, will be at Damascus.

The new terminal station, the hotel, and the repairing works, are all favours which Izzet Pasha, the Sultan's Chamberlain, confers on his native town in his capacity as chief of the Commission in Constantinople.

The Mushir (Field-Marshal), Kiazim Pasha, still acts as chief of the Construction Department, but all plans and the real work are left in the hands of Meisner Pasha, the Chief Engineer, who has gained the complete confidence of the Commission at Constantinople. The construction offices are now at Maan, where Meisner Pasha has built a house, and where he has M. Schroder, a Frenchman, for his principal assistant.

To Meisner Pasha all the credit of the construction of this very difficult project certainly belongs, and he has served the Turks well.

The permanent way is well laid, and the bridges are solidly constructed.

The Traffic Department of the sections already open is in a far less satisfactory condition, and great confusion results from want of proper direction and system. The chief offices are in Haifa, and the Mushir, Riza Pasha, an unsuccessful Commander in the Yemen, is the nominal manager.

With him is Rear-Admiral Khalil Pasha, who superintends the disembarkation of stores at Haifa Pier.

General Jewad Pasha and fifty military officers of various ranks assist in the administration at Haifa, and have little knowledge or experience of railway management.

Rolling-stock.

Engines.—The existence of heavy gradients in the Yarmuk Valley and south of Amman has necessitated the purchase of high-power duplex engines to deal with the accumulation of traffic at these points. Eight have been ordered from Henschel and Sohn, of Cassel, and of these six have arrived, and are in use on the Yarmuk Valley section. They weigh nearly 60 tons, and are consequently rather too heavy for the light rails laid down. Several derailments have taken place recently, owing to this cause.

The rails vary from 38 to 42 and 52 lb. per yard; the latter being found on the Haifa branch.

There are in addition :—

9 large Krauss engines with tender each of 40 tons.
12 small Krauss of 30 tons.
4 "B" Hohenzollern engines of small capacity, for use on the Haifa branch.

This represents a total of thirty-three engines, many of which are under temporary repair.

There are twelve others, but they are useless, being out of repair or used for shunting only, and cannot be counted on for the general traffic.

Fifteen more of the goods type have been ordered, which will increase the total to sixty.

Other rolling-stock comprises :—

5 sleeping saloons used by high officials travelling, or by tourists.
2 1st class carriages, chiefly used in the tourist season on the Haifa branch, or when specially required.
19 3rd class carriages.
100 covered waggons.
145 open platform waggons.
6 special waggons for sheep.

The Krauss engines are made by two German firms—Saechs Maschinen Fabrik, of Richard Hartmann, Chemnitz, 1906; or Arn. Jung, Jungenthal bei Kirchen, Rheinland, 1906.

Carriages and waggons are by Belgian firms, which also obtain several important machinery contracts. The two principal firms are the Société Anonyme Belge, Lion Hiard, Directeur; and the Usines et Fonderies de Baume et Marpent, Usine de Morlanweiss, Haine St. Pierre, Belgique, the latter now obtaining most of the contracts. Rails have been supplied by several different firms, the last contract being given to a French-Belgian firm in Russia, its rails being marked "Providence-Russe, 1906." The iron is said to be of a very soft quality and to bend easily. Cockerill, a large Belgian firm, has executed another contract, the American Steel Trust another (the rails being marked "Maryland, VII–IIIIII"), and a German firm at Donawitz another contract.

The covered waggon is the most useful vehicle for the conveyance of troops, as it gives some shelter from the summer sun and cold winds in winter, while the peasants are accustomed to lying on the floor.

The interior floor space is 27 ft. by 6 ft. 10 in., entered by double sliding doors at each side, 4 feet wide each leaf, or an 8-feet opening.

The sides of the open platform waggon are made to let down, and these are also much used for transport of troops, pilgrims, and workmen, but they afford no shelter.

The interior floor space measures 31 ft. by 7 ft. 10 in.; forty to forty-five men are usually crowded on to these waggons in troop trains.

Six to eight of the small Syrian ponies can be carried in one covered waggon.

All these waggons are of a capacity of 15,000 kilog., or 15 tons.

The tare weight of a covered waggon is 8,500 kilog., or 8½ tons.

The length of military trains would be entirely regulated by the weight the engine could haul up the steep gradients of the Yarmuk Valley and of Amman. With the usual type of engine six trucks, each loaded with 10 tons of goods, can be hauled up. With 40 men in each truck this would be 240 for each track, or 60 tons of goods. This specially applies to the long Yarmuk Valley incline; that at Amman is worked by taking the train up in two sections of five carriages each. The new duplex engines can take double these weights, but then the engines have been found too heavy for the rails.

Brakes.

Hand brakes are in use on all these carriages, but Hardy's system of automatic brakes is gradually being introduced, and some engines and carriages on the Haifa branch are already fitted.

Couplings.

A more secure method of coupling is now being introduced to replace the single buffer and hook, which was found very liable to break. Two screw couplings and two chains are now used and found to answer well.

Signalling.

The signalling is very simple, and consists in the driver of a train obtaining a "line clear" paper or message from the stationmaster, which takes him on to the next stopping-place. Green and white lamps are used at night at the points, but there are no other signals.

Neglect of Rolling-stock.

The rolling-stock is also in a bad way through neglect. The third-class carriages, the only passenger vehicles on the main line, have scarcely a pane of glass in the windows, and the rain pours through the roof in bad weather. For my journey a friendly engineer went round and unscrewed any whole windows he could find in other carriages, and by this means a sheltered corner at one end of the carriage was obtained. A heated axle is not uncommon, and one unfortunate waggon on which 25 tons of wooden beams had been piled, regardless of the fact that its maximum load was 15 tons, collapsed, and had to be left behind at a wayside station.

The pilgrims, who are not carried gratis except in a few cases, complain bitterly of the windowless carriages and open platform waggons on which they are forced to travel. There is still a large number who continue the old method of travelling the whole way by road, and there are others also who leave the Hejaz line at Deraa, cross over to Mezerib, and continue their way to Damascus by the French line.

The mosque carriage, specially constructed in Constantinople Arsenal, was resting in a siding at Deraa. The woodwork had not been properly seasoned, and was warped and split, the curtains were torn, the floor dirty, and the whole had an air of neglect, while, owing to the carriage having been made too wide for the gauge, I was told that when in motion excessive rolling set in, and serious devotional exercises became impossible. There are some saloon sleeping carriages available for high officials travelling, or for tourists who will pay the very high charges demanded.

A European traffic manager who had sufficient tact to deal with Riza Pasha and the Turkish officials would alter all this and largely increase the revenue of the line, otherwise it is difficult to see how the line can continue working under its present system with any chance of success in paying its way.

If an Englishman could be appointed to replace M. Gaudin, it would be an excellent means of introducing an English element into the working of the line.

Supply of Water to Stations.

The supply of water to stations and working parties is carried out in galvanized iron barrels of a specially strong design, electrically welded at each end, and holding 75 litres (16½ gallons) and closed by a metal screw plug.

Two of these constitute the load for a camel which are used to supply working parties away from railhead.

They are also carried by trains for giving out the daily supply to stations which have none. Their strong construction and the fact of being electrically welded with no joints for leakage make them very suitable for standing the rough usage in these services, and without them the supply of water, as Meisner Pasha informed me, would probably break down.

Windmill Pumps.

Windmill pumps are found most useful and are erected where there are wells. Steady winds, sometimes creating violent dust storms, are usual in the desert, especially at Maan and Tebuk. A steam pump is kept in reserve for each windmill pump but is rarely used.

Artesian wells have never really been tried, as the contract with a Belgian firm fell through. An attempt was made near Zerka in rocky soil which spoilt the boring machine, and only the depth of 30 metres was reached. The hollow basin east of Tebuk would seem a favourable site and there are others near Maan. The general geological formation is limestone and sandstone with occasional lava beds or "harra."

Coal Supply.

This is an important feature as all coal is now imported for the line from Cardiff, only a small quantity being obtained from the Turkish mines of Heraklia on the Black Sea.

The latter is found too smoky and liable to choke the tubes and is used mixed with Cardiff in small quantities.

The reserves of coal at Haifa are ridiculously small, and through the improvidence of the administration it has actually happened that the Haifa–Damascus branch stopped working for forty-eight hours owing to the non-arrival of a steamer at Haifa. Only by borrowing from the French Company and from a British steamer in the harbour could traffic be resumed.

M. Gaudin is now urging the administration to keep a reserve of at least 6,000 tons.

The annual consumption for the line is from 20,000 to 25,000 tons per annum.

A steamer unloading at Haifa Pier can discharge 300 tons of coal a-day in fine weather, which can only be trusted to occur in the summer months.

Defensive Station Buildings.

The station buildings south of Tebuk are built on a special plan, with loopholes to enable the ten men usually found at a station to stand a siege from Arab raiders.

The usual building is of stone, 11 metres by 12 metres, containing four rooms, others are slightly larger and contain six rooms. The only entrance is by an iron door leading into a small courtyard on which the windows of the living room open. In the floor of this is a masonry cistern, or well, if such supply is obtainable.

Provisions for fourteen days are stored in one of the rooms.

The walls are loopholed at a height of 8 feet above the ground.

The building is 5 metres high, and near the roof are some small windows 50 c.m. square.

The flat roof can be ascended from the courtyard by iron battens let into the wall.

The wall at the top is only 50 c.m. high and is without loopholes, so that firing would be only from the loopholes below.

There is a verandah in front of the door, which seems a weak point.

The latrine is in a loopholed projecting part, and is on the dry earth system.

Receipts.

The receipts last year amounted as far as could be ascertained, to nearly £ T. 100,000, and it is said that the traffic receipts on the paying sections up to Amman just balance the working expenses of the whole as far as Maan, the southern extension to Tebuk not included, this remaining entirely under military control.

Revenue.

The present revenue produced by the Hejaz stamp tax and other sources amounted, according to Meisner Pasha's estimate, to £ T. 350,000, or 8,750,000 fr. per annum, and this amount he counted on as available for construction purposes.

Cost of Construction.—The Section in the Yarmuk Valley.

The cost per kilometre of the present Arabian sections has been kept at £ T. 1,400, including the purchase of rolling-stock, and it was proposed not to continue building bridges over the dry wadis of Arabia but trust to the chance of the line being washed away at long intervals by rain floods, so that now he thought the construction expenses might be kept a little below this figure.

Meisner Pasha estimated that £ T. 3,000,000 had been spent on the construction of the whole line up to the present.

Future Plans.

He mentioned that the construction plans for the future were as follows:—

First: the completion of the line as quickly as possible up to Medina, the first of the Holy Cities.

After this the following would be undertaken:—

1. The construction of a port at Haifa.
2. The construction of a line from Jedda to Mecca.
3. Branch lines.
   (1.) Amman—Salt.
   (2.) Haifa—Acre branch.
   (3.) Fule—Nablus—Jerusalem.
   (4.) Tel-esh-Shemmam—Plain of Sharon—Jaffa.

Improvement of Districts since the Opening of the Line.

Since the construction of the line, the fertile districts round Amman and along the Wadi Zerka have been brought under cultivation by Circassian colonists who have settled in several thriving villages, and are fully able to hold their own against the Bedouin tribes, their natural enemies.

The cultivation of the rich Hauran district has also extended considerably to the south and east of Deraa, and is now the most important source of revenue for the line.

Traffic from the fertile plain of Esdraelon (Merj Amir), on the Haifa branch, is also improving, notwithstanding the competition of the local camel caravans.

The European tourist traffic on the Haifa line from Nazareth and Tiberias to Damascus is quite an important item in the revenue.

The paying parts of the line are therefore the main line from Damascus to Amman and the Haifa branch generally; the sections from Amman to Maan and southwards into Arabia traverse a desert country, and produce practically nothing.

This year, however, the pilgrim traffic as far as Tebuk brought in a revenue of £ T. 12,000.

Country along the Hejaz Railway between Maan and Medina.

The country south of Maan comprising Arabia Petræa has been seldom traversed by Europeans. For 38 miles south of Maan it is bare stony desert, slightly undulating and crossed by several shallow wadis, which only fill in the rains at uncertain intervals of two or three years. Some low shrubs and scattered acacia trees are to be found along them. The rugged hills towards the Red Sea constitute the El Hisne district, where several small springs, scanty vegetation, and a few Arab settlements are to be found. In Roman times several small settlements existed there.

To the east of the line the country is more arid, but generally level. Akaba, or Akaba-i-Hejazie, to distinguish it from the other Akaba on the Red Sea, is a ruinous castle or "kala" on the pilgrim route, with a cistern dependent on rain supply.

Just south of this commences an important natural feature, formed by the long escarpment of Batn-el-Ghrul, which necessitates a winding descent for the line in the form of a loop for nearly 500 feet.

This wall of sandstone crags extends in a wide arc to the north-west, and forms a

similar obstruction across the Maan–Akaba route. To the east it extends for some 40 miles without any easy passage, except a narrow foot track. The pilgrim route finds a fairly easy descent alongside the railway.

The black rocks, in twisted shapes and pinnacles, contrasted with the brilliant red, yellow, and dazzling white of the rock and drift sand, form a very striking picture. The aspect changes at the foot of the descent, as a wide, undulating plain of red sand and stones supervenes, and extends far to the south. From its surface project many curious dark red or black pinnacles, which sometimes rise to flat-topped ridges.

To the west is a black serrated ridge, swathed in drifts of sand for much of the way up its slopes, forming the watershed with the Red Sea.

Some 40 miles to the east is a continuous scarp of red sandstone, which forms the edge of the plain in that direction.

At Mudevere, 72 miles from Maan, is reached the first permanent water, and this is only an inferior supply from a deep well.

20 miles farther south, after crossing the Haraat Ahmar, a ridge dotted with many black pinnacles of rock, and covered with drifts of sand and stones, is Zat-el-Haj, consisting of an old stone castle, half-a-dozen palm trees, with a good spring and well at the station.

Jebel Sherora, the "pulpit of the Prophet," is a curious landmark in the ridges to the east, rising in turreted form to a flat summit nearly 3,000 feet above the plain.

Tebuk contains the first habitations since leaving Maan, sixty houses of negroid Arabs in an oasis of date palms, a few fruit gardens and fields of wheat, about half-a-mile square, all watered from a large spring.

Good water is found at the station wells, and advantage is taken of this to form a large depôt for continuing the work in the waterless country farther south.

It is curious to note that all the wadis from Batn-el-Ghrul, on the north, to Medain-i-Salih, on the south, drain inwards to a large depression east of Tebuk, at the foot of Jebel Sherora, and in a season of exceptional rain a shallow lake is formed here, which, however, soon becomes dry.

Possibly artesian wells might here be a success but the attempt has not yet been made. South of Tebuk is the Wadi Atsel or Wadi Akhdar, the dry bed of which the line crosses by a masonry bridge of twenty arches.

Although rain only comes to fill the wadi every two or three years, the bridge was this year found necessary as a rainstorm caused 6 feet of water to pass under it.

Farther south it is proposed not to build such bridges and thus save expense, the line being laid across the dry bed, the chance of rainstorms and washouts being taken.

The limestone hills now close in, the country becomes more accidented and, before reaching Akhdar, the line traverses a tunnel of 180 metres and then a rocky gorge called the Boghaz-i-Akhdar, before it emerges into the narrow valley between steep rocky hills in which the stone castle of Akhdar is situated.

There are no habitations, but an excellent well with a constant supply is found inside the castle. The line now follows a waterless valley of the Wadi Akhdar and its tributaries by Dizad to Muadhem, another stone castle on the pilgrim route with a scanty supply of rain water stored in cisterns.

Muadhem is the nearest point on the line to Teima.

Medain-i-Salih is a similar castle among some rock-cut ruins with a poor supply of water from a well.

The country is now much more broken, and before Medain is reached, the line traverses a rugged passage called the Mahrek-en-Naga through limestone crags.

The lava-strewn plateau of Jebel Aured extends to the west and shuts off access to the sea; eastward, towards Teima and Hail, are sandy plains crossed by some rocky ridges.

Teima is a fertile oasis in these high open plains, an outlying Colony from Jebel Shammar of 250 houses surrounded by palm groves.

The railway passes it some forty miles to the west, but the place is important as on the road to Hail.

Some thirty-five miles south of Medain the line reaches the large oasis of El Ula, the first habitation since Tebuk possessing the first good supply of water since Akhdar, nearly 150 miles to the northward. Here it is intended to make another large depot on the line, the last before Medina.

The country between Medain-i-Salih and Hedie, and thence to Medina is rather more hilly, and waterless as before, but a trace has been found following some of the smaller wadis tributary to the Wadi Humd, which affords a fairly easy gradient.

As the line advances south of El Ula, a hilly country is traversed by an open wadi, a tributary of the Wadi Humd, which affords a fairly easy trace for the line.

The Wadi Humd is the first opening in the line of hills to the west, giving access to the Red Sea at Wej. This wadi drains all the country about Medina and Kheibar, as well as the country round El Ula, and forms an easy passage towards the coast.

Kheibar is another important oasis, somewhat less fertile than Teima, lying off the line some 40 miles east of Hedie.

It contains 4,000 inhabitants in a large extent of palm trees, with several good springs, and is surrounded by lava formations and barren rocks, from it a well-frequented route lies to Hail, and gives the place much of its importance.

From Medina to Yambo-el-Bahr, on the Red Sea, is an easy, well-frequented route, along which it would probably pay to make a branch line from Medina to the coast.

From Medina to Mecca the trace of the line is not yet determined, no surveys having been made. The direct route is said to be rather hilly and difficult, and, moreover, passes through the country of the hostile Beni Harb; one proposal is to take the trace somewhat east of the direct line through Suveriye and Sefaine, and down the Wadi Limon to Mecca. This route is nearly waterless, but avoids the more hilly part of the country.

Another scheme is to take the line down to Rabigh, on the coast, and thence to Mecca. Both are indicated on the Turkish map of the projected routes inclosed in Sir N. O'Conor's despatch No. 252 of the 6th April, 1904. (I.D. No. 1836.)

Competition of French Lines with Hejaz Railway.

Since the opening of the Damascus–Haifa line, the French Company has suffered, owing to trade being diverted towards Haifa, and plans are now being considered of improving the narrow gauge part of the line between Beirut and Damascus.

It will be remembered that the broad gauge section exists only between Rayak and Aleppo, and the line between Rayak and Beirut over the Lebanon is narrow. This gives no outlet for the broad gauge to the sea-coast, and it is now proposed to construct a new line from Rayak to Beirut through the Lebanon by a tunnel, and then at a lower level down the valley of the Beirut River to the sea. This was the original project, but the inventors of the rack rail system managed to induce the Company to accept their project, with the result that it is now unable to compete with the traffic brought to it from the interior, and unless something is done, the improvements at Haifa or Tripoli will divert almost all the traffic to those places.

The new broad-gauge line after leaving Rayak would run to Zahle, and then through a tunnel some 5 kilom. long in the main ridge of the Lebanon, into the head of one of the tributaries of the Beirut River or Nahr-el-Beirut. The valley of this stream could be followed at a comparatively easy gradient down to the sea at Beirut. At Beirut itself the present harbour is far too cramped, and it is proposed to extend it considerably in view of the increased traffic that will accrue if the above scheme is carried out.

It is also proposed to carry the broad gauge through the Anti-Lebanon from Rayak to Damascus; but this will be a comparatively easy project as the present gradients are not too steep.

The rack rail over the Lebanon could remain and be utilized for the large summer traffic to various resorts on the Lebanon.

In winter it is now closed for long periods by snow.

Arab Tribes along the Railway.

In the desert immediately south-east of Damascus are the Wuld Ali, the deadly enemies of the Druzes, with whom they have constant skirmishes.

The District of El Leja, which the railway skirts between Mesmie and Deraa, is an old lava flow from one of the mountains of Jebel Druz and a mass of lava blocks 30 to 40 feet above the level of the plain. In its fastnesses all kinds of Arab and Druze outlaws find a hiding place, and the district is a most unsafe one for travellers Attacks are not, however, made on the line, and there is a strong garrison at Mesmie. The Druzes of the Jebel Druz are quiescent at present, and their trade in corn and other produce comes principally to the stations of Ezra and Ghazale, near Deraa.

They are well armed, and are said to possess 16,000 rifles, principally Martinis, with some Gras and Berdan. The people of the Hauran Plain are also warlike and of fine physique, possessing many Martinis also. It was not uncommon when travelling through these to meet half-a-dozen men, well mounted, and all carrying Martinis. They live in villages and cultivate this fertile plain, which is the granary of Damascus and exports to Haifa also. The Hauran people are under Government control, but are always spoken of as turbulent, which means they do not submit readily to Government exactions. The centre of Government of the Hauran is vested in a Mutessarif who lives at Sheikh Miskin.

There are thriving Circassian settlements at Amman and along the Wadi Zarka, which hold their own easily against Bedouin raiders; but, at the same time, they have small respect for the Government.

The two great Arab tribes along the line between Deraa and Maan are the Beni Sakhr and the Adwan, the latter a large confederation of seven sub-tribes.

They occasionally make attempts on the line when they are camped near it, such as lifting a rail or placing large stones along it; but the Sheikhs receive a subsidy from the Government to prevent raids, and the system seems to work fairly well here.

The Bedouin are generally hostile to the Government and the line, and the Sheikhs were often spoken of in terms of contempt for having accepted money from the Government.

The Adwan and Beni Sakhr are usually at enmity. The former are generally found near Es Salt, and the latter farther north. The Sheikh of the Beni Sakhr is Reimi-ibn-Faiz, and of the Adwan, Sheikh Ali Diab, whose son is called Sheikh-i-Sultan.

The great desert tribes of Roalla and Anaize of the Eastern desert rarely approach the line.

South of Tebuk the hostility of the Arabs greatly increases and becomes a serious factor to be dealt with. The powerful tribe of Beni Atie and its sub-sections roam about the country between Maen Tebuk and Medain-i-Salih, and have shown themselves hostile by cutting off soldiers who stray from the working parties and by making attacks on the construction works, one of such attacks quite recently resulted in a captain and four men being killed.

The Sherarat to the east of Tebuk are another section of the Beni Atie or allied to them. The Beni Atie are in touch to the east with the tribes of Jebel Shammar, the great confederation under Ibn Rashid Emir of Hail and would act with them. The Chief of the Beni Atie is Sheikh Harb-ibn-Atie, whose tents are usually near Teima.

The Fekr or Fakir is an allied tribe of the Beni Atie, their Sheikhs being Mutlak and Shebab.

The Laida are another sub-section under Sheikh Diab.

Both the Fekr and the Laida claim to be branches of the Wuld Ali near Damascus. The Wuld Suleiman, under Sheikh Asker are also a sub-section of the Beni Atie.

Between Medina and Mecca is the powerful tribe of Beni Harb, which opposes even the extension of the telegraph and naturally object strongly to the line. Their present Chief is Sheikh Hamud.

The Jihaine and the Billi to the north-west of Medina are allied to the Beni Harb, and it is they who recently stopped the working parties near Medina.

The Ibn-er-Fadi, under Sheikh Suleiman Pasha, are on the road between Medina and the coast, and have rendered assistance to the Government, their Sheikh being rewarded with the title of Pasha.

Possibility of invading Central Arabia from the Railway.

If the Turks hope to make some point on the line a base for a movement against Central Arabia, they must select Tebuk or Akhdar as the starting point for such an expedition, the question of water being a dominating factor. Muadhem, the nearest point to Hail, has a scarcely sufficient supply of water.

To be successful the Turks must alter their present want of system and create a more perfect supply organization for their columns in the long desert marches, and establish lines of communication that cannot be raided by the very mobile forces of the enemy.

The supply question is the great difficulty experienced in campaigning in Arabia, for when Arabs have been brought to face Turks in the open they have usually been beaten, but when they confine themselves to raiding communications and cutting supplies, they have forced the Turks to withdraw as may be instanced by the recent

Yemen campaigns and the recent Turkish expedition into Kassim and Hail which failed owing to being literally starved out.

Thus a movement inland from Tebuk or Muadhem towards Central Arabia is an operation far more difficult than would appear from simply working out distances on the map, and would require a most perfect system of organization, which up to the present the Turks do not seem to have been able to create.

The great Chiefs, Ibn Saoud or Ibn Rashid by combining the various sub-tribes might get together 20,000 men each; and of these some 4,000 would be cavalry who would act as scouts and the remainder be mounted two men on a camel, carrying with them a store of provisions, cartridges, and a skin of water. They can cover sixty or seventy miles a-day, and the Turks have no defensive posts against an advance of such a mobile force.

Possibility of a Line from Maan to Akaba.

The construction of a line from Maan to Akaba has for the present been abandoned and the project entirely dropped.

There are three alternative routes that might be found for the construction of such a line:

1. The direct route from Maan to Akaba, by Guera, following the present track used by troops.

Owing to the very sudden descent of some 3,000 feet before reaching Guera from Maan, this line would be far too costly to construct, and this route is not to be thought of.

2. A line from a point farther south, such as Mudewwere to Akaba. This might start from the Wadi Rutm Station, at the foot of the Batu-el-Ghrul descent, and follow a difficult but possible route westward to the Gulf of Akaba.

Meisner Pasha mentioned this would have to pass for 40 kilom. along the eastern shore of the Gulf, and for this reason it was unlikely to be sanctioned by the Sultan.

3. A route from Maan, by the Wadi Musa and ruins of Petra, after which a fairly easy descending gradient could be found into the Wadi Araba, and so to Akaba. This is perhaps the least difficult of the three routes, and, if the line is made, it will probably go this way.

Besides being easier to construct, it would be sheltered from attack by sea.

The route crosses an easy col on the way to Petra, and there are few difficulties of construction thus far, the descent to the Wadi Araba would probably be found the most difficult.

Jeddah–Mecca Railway.

This project presents no engineering difficulties, and would follow generally the line of the pilgrim route.

It would be principally intended for the use of the Indian and other pilgrims arriving by sea. The plans have already been drawn, but it is not very clear whether the Grand Sherif of Mecca and local Arabs would welcome the innovation.

A line from Yambo to Medina would not be difficult either, and would probably be a paying line too.

2. Haifa Harbour Project.

The construction of a port at Haifa has been found more costly than at first supposed.

The present pier is roughly built for a distance of 350 yards into about 15 feet of water, and serves to land railway material and stores from lighters.

It is formed of rough stone blocks quarried near by, and these are unable to stand the storms raised by the north-west winds which drive into the bay, so that already 30 yards at the end has been swept away, and the twisted iron rails testify to the force of the waves.

It is necessary, therefore, to construct a breakwater to give shelter to the landing quays. This breakwater will jut out from the town front, as shown in the accompanying plan, the arm A B being 700 metres, after which it will curve round to C, the harbour entrance being on the north next the shore of the Bay of Acre.

The arm B C will be built in instalments, so as not to commit the railway to too much expenditure at first. The quay A D will be about 500 metres, with a depth of 18 feet alongside.

The arms A B, B C will have landing stages for larger vessels, with rails laid alongside, and have 28 to 34 feet of water alongside.

A considerable portion (shaded on plan) will be filled in to provide room for warehouses and railway sidings, space for which could not otherwise be found.

The plan is from a sketch Meisner Pasha drew for me.

The cost, he said, would amount to 800,000*l.* at first, but the extension of the breakwater will be gradual. Other estimates gave the total cost as 1,100,000*l.*

Meisner Pasha insisted that the port should be made and owned by the Hejaz Railway, and not leased to a foreign Company. Such a Company, he remarked, would at once engage in competition the Beirut Harbour, and a war of rates would be disadvantageous, so that it were better to keep it in Government hands.

This probably means that the Pasha would very much like to keep the construction in his own hands.

3. Branch Lines.

(i.)— *Amman–Salt.*

The Amman–Salt branch which was to have developed extensive phosphate deposits near Salt has not been proceeded with, chiefly owing to examination having proved the phosphate not as rich as at first supposed.

Meisner Pasha's estimate was 1,000,000 cubic metres of rich deposit worth working and he said that last report confirmed his view.

There were other extensive deposits but not sufficiently rich in phosphate to pay for working and transport to the coast.

There seemed no idea of extending this branch to Jerusalem, as the deep depression of the Jordan would be crossed and this could only be done at great cost.

(ii.)—*Haifa–Acre Branch.*

This short branch of ten miles along the sandy shore of the Bay of Acre has been previously suggested, and Meisner Pasha has revived the scheme as likely to prove a paying one. Plans have been made but its construction is not so easy as might appear, as two rivers have to be crossed, the Nahr-el-Mokatta (Kishon) and the Nahr Namein, both in channels of deep shifting sand which entail expensive pier foundations.

(iii.)—*Fule–Nablus–Jerusalem Branch.*

This would leave the Haifa–Deraa branch at Fule in the Plain of Esdraelon and pass through a well populated and fertile district of Syria by the large town of Nablus to Jerusalem. It would follow the existing main artery of traffic and not be difficult to construct. It would have considerable military value as a means of linking up Jerusalem, the coast districts of Jaffa and Ghaza with Damascus and other parts of Syria, and afford a means of concentrating Turkish troops from Damascus towards Ghaza to threaten the Egyptian frontier.

(iv.)—*Tel-esh-Shemmam–Plain of Sharon–Jaffa.*

This is another branch generally parallel to the above, starting from Tel-esh-Shemmam in the plain of Esdraelon and passing over a low ridge east of Carmel, after which it could traverse the fertile Plain of Sharon to Jaffa where connection could be made with Jerusalem, or a continuation made to Ghaza if found desirable.

This was only a project which had not yet taken definite shape, and probably the Fule–Jerusalem scheme would first be undertaken.

4. The Bagdad Railway in relation to the Syrian Lines.

Meisner Pasha said the combination had practically been decided of the French Syrian lines with the Bagdad Railway, although there might be surface opposition, with a view to obtaining more favourable terms from the Government.

By this means the Bagdad Company would profit by the high kilometric guarantees of the Syrian lines, especially those on the section from Hama to Aleppo, and recoup themselves to some extent for the heavy expenditure in crossing the Taurus and Amanus ranges. He said that, according to his view of recent negotiations, the section from the Gulf to Mosul would become British, and the remaining portion from the Taurus to Mosul would be made by a combination of French and German capital, and on this understanding the combination of the French Syrian lines with the Bagdad Railway had been decided on.

Meisner Pasha did not favour the construction of a port at Alexandretta, owing to the difficulty of traversing the hills which overlook the town on the east, and he seemed to think that the port would be made at Kestabol, as referred to in the Bagdad Railway Concession.

Kestabol, he said, has no real existence, even on the map, and is only a convenient expression to include the most favourable site in the vicinity, such as Ayas or Yimurtaluk, a few miles farther down.

He was strongly in favour of making Tripoli the principal port in North Syria, as being the best harbour on the coast, well sheltered, with a sandy bottom, only requiring dredging to obtain the necessary depth.

An easy route for a railway could be found following the present road from Tripoli to Homs, there would be no steep gradients, the northern end of the Lebanon range would be turned, and this gap between it and the Ansarie Mountains would give access to the fertile Plain of Homs, and afford an outlet to the coast for the broad gauge line Aleppo–Homs–Rayak.

In this connection it would perhaps be well to quote Article XII of the Bagdad Railway Convention, in which specific mention is made of Tripoli:—

"Dans le cas où le Gouvernement Impérial déciderait l'exécution d'embranchements reliant le chemin de fer faisant l'objet de la présente Convention à la mer, en un point situé entre Mersine et Tripolis de Syrie, il ne pourra accorder la Concession des dits embranchements qu'exclusivement au concessionnaire, sous réserve, toutefois, de sauvegarder les droits déjà accordés à la Société du Chemin de Fer Damas–Hamah et Prolongements."

The idea of making a branch to Tripoli seems, therefore, to have been under consideration when the Bagdad Railway Concession was drawn up.

The Tripoli–Homs line could be cheaply constructed. The total cost for the 95 kilom. between the two places, Meisner Pasha estimated at 150,000*l.*, not including the construction of a port at Tripoli or the dredging work there necessary.

He maintained that Beirut as a port had gained an entirely fictitious importance after the events of 1860, which led to the creation of the Lebanon province, and owing to this the claims of Tripoli as the principal port of Syria were overlooked; but the place might now be restored to its proper importance. At the same time it is difficult to agree with Meisner Pasha's condemnation of Alexandretta as a Mediterranean port for the Bagdad Railway, as it is naturally the port of Aleppo and of the rich districts near, while Tripoli lies rather too far south as an outlet for these places.

The difficulties of traversing the hills east of Alexandretta are not very formidable, and when the project was proposed by an English Company, surveys proved it was quite feasible.

It must also be remembered that the Bagdad Railway itself will have to traverse the same range higher up near Kazanali, and will encounter similar difficulties but only at a different point.

5. Proposed Connection between Egypt and the Euphrates Valley at Nejef.

In view of the experience gained by the working of the Hejaz Railway, I would venture to put forward a proposal for a line connecting Egypt and the Euphrates Valley at Nejef, where it would join the proposed Bagdad line. This would connect up the two countries of Egypt and Mesopotamia, one already rich, and the other with a

soil as fertile awaiting development. It would follow the ancient route between Egypt and Assyria, on which the rock city of Petra, near Maan, the old capital of Edom, was a station.

From Cairo the line would pass near Suez and across the Sinai Peninsula to the head of the Gulf of Akaba. Thence the ascent would be made to Maan through Petra, water being found on the way and at the latter place, where there is a good supply. From there the line could be taken across to the Wadi Sirhan over gently undulating stony desert, with no hill ranges to hinder construction. It is true that this section is nearly waterless, but there are good wells at Hudruj, and at other points wells could be dug and water found. When the Wadi Sirhan is reached, several wells and a fair water supply is assured.

Jauf is an important oasis on the northern edge of the Great Nefud Desert which is thus avoided.

The oasis contains 50,000 inhabitants, Skaka and Kara being other important places in it.

From Jauf to Nejef on the Euphrates, the route would lie down the wide depression of El Udian, which has good pasturage, in which are several wells used by the Bedouin of the Roalla and Aneize tribes. On only one short section between Maan and the Wadi Sirhan would there be difficulty about water, and it is possible to improve the wells here. The line would have to depend almost entirely on through traffic between the two countries, but in view of the great development that must take place in Mesopotamia when the lower section of the Bagdad Railway is open, and irrigation projects commenced, a considerable trade should be developed.

The line would represent the most direct route from Bussorah and Lower Mesopotamia to Egypt, avoiding a long sea passage and incidentally from India to the Mediterranean.

Distances on the proposed line would be as follows:—

Cairo to Maan, through Akaba and Petra, 305 miles or 492 kilom.

Maan to Jauf 260 miles or 420 kilom., Jauf to Nejef 310 miles or 500 kilom., making a total distance from Cairo to Nejef of 875 miles or 1,412 kilom., little more than the distance from Damascus to Medina, which is 1,300 kilom.

This line could be begun at Akaba, Maan, Nejef, and Cairo simultaneously.

Assuming a general cost of 1,100*l.* per kilometre the total expenditure would work out to 3,000,000*l.*, or 3,500,000*l.* with all expenses.

The line would not so directly threaten Arab independence as the Hejaz line, as it would pass north of the Nefud Desert and the districts of Jebel Shammar and Hail.

As regards the possibility of the line being used by the Turks to attack Egypt from the land side, it may be noted that it would pass close to the sea at Akaba, which place can always be reached by British cruisers, and that an occupation of that place would effectually check any movement towards Egypt.

6. Proposed Central Anatolian Line.

In Damascus, where Izzet Pasha has many friends, it was said that a railway project in which he is now much interested is the construction of a line through Anatolia from Angora through Sivas and Erzingan to Erzeroum, this being constructed by the Turkish Government itself on the same lines as the Hejaz Railway.

Meisner Pasha mentioned that it had even been suggested that he should take over charge of the construction, and said he would be glad to get some change from the climate of Arabia. The object of such a line would be obviously strategical, and its construction would strengthen very greatly the defences of the north-eastern frontier of Turkey against a Russian attack from the side of the Caucasus.

The construction of such a line would not be in contravention of the Arrangement with Russia regarding the construction of railways in the basin of the Black Sea, as lines constructed by the Turkish Government itself are exempt from the agreement. It would form a ready means of bringing the excellent fighting troops of Osmanli race from Asia Minor and enabling them to be mobilized rapidly across the Kars–Erzeroum Road.

(Signed) F. R. MAUNSELL, *Major, R.A.*

War Office, July 1907.

Detailed Report on Hejaz Railway.*

Damascus–Medina: Main Line.

Distances in Kilometres.		Stations.	Details of Line.
Intermediate.	Total.		
..	..	Damascus Terminus ..	The new terminus is to be built overlooking the principal square, near the Government Serai; the line being continued from Kadem, parallel to the French line, past their stations of Meidan and Beramke.
Distances from Kadem.		Damascus – Kadem or Kadem-i-Sherif	This station is at the southern end of the long, straggling Maidan quarter, is half-an-hour's drive from centre of the town, and generally inconvenient. When the new terminus is open this will be retained; it is useful as a goods station, as all the large grain merchants have their stores in the Maidan quarter. One small station building. A goods shed 33 yards by 12 yards, and a loading platform 65 yards long; but practically all loading and unloading is done in the open. Four sidings of 250 yards. Approach to the main road, 300 yards to the west, is easy; no inclosures or gates. A branch line connects with the French station of Maidan, half-a-mile to the north-west. Construction and repairing shops partially completed to the east, connected by siding. They will be worked by electric power from the Town Company's supply. Line passes through gardens for about 2 miles, keeping parallel to the main road to the south, then over well-cultivated plain to the foot of the Jebel Aswad, after which the line bends east to pass over a col in the range, ascending by a gradient of 18/1000 for 6 mile, then descends into Valley of Nahr Awaj, crosses it by a masonry bridge of three 6-metre arches, and turns along the southern face of the steep-ragged massif the Jebel Mania.
20·8	20·8	Kiswe (2,425 ft.) ..	Stone station building, with one siding of 250 yards. A water tank of 25 cubic metres and steam pump. The large village of Kiswe lies at the other side of the Valley of the Nahr Awaj, 1½ miles to the north-west. The Mezerib-Damascus road passes a mile to the west, and a track leads from the village to join it. The French line passes quarter of a mile beyond it. Khan Jenun, an old khan in which a squadron of Nizam Cavalry is quartered, is on the road to the west. Line continues skirting round the foot of Jebel Mania, bending to the east. Well cultivated. Pass Said Pasha's Chiftlik, irrigated by canal from the Nahr.
9·8	30·8	Deir Ali (2,287 ft.) ..	Stone station building. One siding of 250 yards. Water tank of 25 cubic metres. Deir Ali, Druse village with some Christian inhabitants, lies half-a-mile to the east. Still bend to east over cultivated plain.

* A tracing from the original survey of the railway from Maan (459 kilom.) to Hedie (1,130 kilom. scale $\frac{1}{2500}$, contoured at 10 metres vertical interval, exists in M O. 2 B., War Office.

Distances in Kilometres.		Stations.	Details of Line.
Intermediate.	Total.		
21·1	51·7	Mesmie (2,031 ft.) ..	Stone station building and one siding. A mile south is a stone two-storeyed barrack for one battalion, connected with the station by a good metalled road. The station stands on the edge of the Leja, a district covered with lava blocks, some 30 ft. to 50 ft. deep, which afford refuge to malefactors of all kinds and turbulent Arabs. Mesmie commands the northern exit from it. Excellent water supply from some springs close to station. Water tank of 25 cubic metres and pump; several springs irrigate meadows close by and afford grazing. Line bends back to westward again.
11	62·7	Jebab (2,110 ft.) ..	Stone station building and siding on edge of Leja. Well, with poor supply.
6·6	69·3	Hebab (2,050 ft.) ..	Similar station. Well, with poor supply. Line skirts edge of Leja. Several small villages and cultivated plain of Hauran to the west.
8·7	78	Mahaje (1,975 ft.) ..	Stone station building and one siding. Well, with fair supply, and water tank of 25 cubic metres. Village, fifty stone houses close by to the east. Just before reaching Ezra line crosses the Wadi Kanawat from the Jebel Druz (a shallow stream 30 ft. wide in a stony bed in spring, but dry in summer) by 25-ft. stone arch.
13·4	41·4	Ezra (1,930 ft.).. ..	Stone station building and one siding of 250 yards. The Leja ends to the eastward now. Good metalled road crosses 2 miles south, going from Sheikh Miskin to Bessetah and Jebel Druz. Station has developed into important centre for corn export of the Hauran Plain and also Jebel Druz. More sidings required. Station inclosure choked up with piles of corn sacks awaiting transport. Well, with steam pump; one tank of 25 cubic metres. Quarter of a mile before Ghazale, line crosses stream in stony bed, 20 ft. to 30 ft. wide, from Jebel Druz
14·9	106·3	Ghazale (1,889 ft.) ..	Stone station building and one siding of 250 yards. Village close by. The principal centre for corn export of the Hauran and the Jebel Druz (brought by camel caravans). Piles of corn sacks in the open awaiting transport. Well and pump. Water tank of 25 cubic metres
16·9	123·2	Deraa (1,735 ft.) ..	Junction with Haifa line. Large stone station building of two storeys. Covered goods station and platform 50 yards long. Approaches easy, with good road to the village. Part of the corn trade of the Hauran comes here. Four lines of sidings, some 1,800 yards in all, are found insufficient for the traffic. Trains from all the four directions (one from each) meet here at mid-day, and usually stop from one to two hours. The triangle is useful for the Haifa line to save turning the engine. Two water tanks, of 25 cubic metres each, supplied from a good well with pump. Engine shed for four engines, and repairing shop for engines and carriages. Coal loading platform with a small reserve of some 20 tons. A good stone restaurant building, kept by a Greek, has been constructed near the station, and is most useful in the tourist season, when fifty or sixty tourists pass through in the day. Deraa, 400 houses, is on the far side of a deepish ravine 1 mile to the south-west. Seat of a Kaimakam, under the Mutessarif of the Hauran, whose seat of government is at Sheikh Miskin. There is a proposal to move the Government to Deraa.

Distances in Kilometres.		Stations.	Details of Line.
Intermediate.	Total.		
16·09	123·2	Deraa (*continued*) ..	Line ascends over open cultivated country along the Wadi Zedi. Crosses by a bridge of five masonry arches of 20 ft., over a stream 40 yards wide and 1 ft. deep, in a rocky bed; piers 30 ft. high. Diversion could be made. Stream almost dry in summer. Crosses small stream by two masonry arches of 15 ft., with little water even in spring.
12·7	135·9	Massib	Stone station building and one siding of 250 yards. Buildings are of better construction than on the Damascus-Deraa section, where they are low, flat roofed, and with inferior accommodation. Country well cultivated. Nassib, 150 houses, is on a knoll 1 mile to west. Some small culverts cover stony ravines. Undulating country; some cultivation; good grazing in spring.
26	161·7	Mafrak (1,961 ft.) ..	Stone station building and siding of 250 yards. Pilgrim route passes close to west. Kalaat-el-Mafrak, a ruined castle with large stone reservoir adjoining, which usually contains water. Windmill pump brings water to tank at station. Beni Sakhr Arabs usually found here. Line proceeds over open undulating country; some rock cuttings 15 ft. deep.
23·6	185·3	Somra (1,834 ft.) ..	Stone station building; one siding. Some grazing in spring. Line descends towards Wadi Zerka, following a wide valley with stream containing water only in spring. This is the Wadi Dolgil.
17·1	202·7	Kalaat-ez-Zerka (2,027 ft.)	Stone station building and one siding on edge of a plateau overlooking the Wadi Zerka. Thriving Circassian village of 100 houses, three-quarters of a mile to west. Water from well. Tank 25 cubic metres. Line descends at gradient of 1/62 to 1/55 into wide depression of Wadi Zerka, a perennial stream, and a tributary of the Jordan. Valley well cultivated; irrigation from stream.
..	207	.. ..	Railway crosses to right bank by masonry bridge of six 20-ft. arches, and continues up valley at 1,780.
..	210	.. ..	Recrosses to right bank by masonry bridge of six 20-ft. arches over stream 40 ft. wide, in stony bed, and some 2 feet deep, in stream bordered by a few shrubs and low trees. Valley well cultivated.
19·7	222·4	Amman (2,418 ft.) ..	Large two-storied station buildings. Turntable. Coal depôt. Engine-shed for five engines. Water tank of 50 cubic metres, supplied by steam pump from river close by. A good spring for drinking close to station. Small repairs can be done here. Two sidings of 300 yards each; usually an accumulation of rolling-stock. Circassian village of 800 houses close by and ruins of Rabbath Ammon. District widely cultivated in last two years. At present trains of only five carriages can ascend to Kisair, thus requiring two trips for an ordinary train. Duplex engines of greater power are now being provided to obviate this. Line turns out of the Amman Valley and ascends at once the southern heights, following a tributary ravine. Some sharp curves of 100 to 150 metres radius, with ascending gradient of 1/50 and short sections of 1/45; these at the sharpest curves. Several derailments have taken place on this gradient.

Distances in Kilometres.		Stations.	Details of Line.
Intermediate.	Total.		
.	232·2	Amman Viaduct ..	Crosses a masonry viaduct of ten arches of 25 ft. span, with a supporting arch in the centre, the whole 60 metres long and 20 metres high. Approaches through earth cutting 40 ft. Winds through some rock cuttings and over an embankment of 60 ft., across a dry ravine, keeping the main valley to the right.
..	..	Tunnel	Crosses a side valley by a 20-ft. masonry bridge, winds round the head of another ravine, through a tunnel in soft white rock 140 metres long on a curve of 100 metres radius at a gradient of 1/45. Crosses a ravine and then passes through a rock cutting 40 ft. deep, after which more open country is reached, and, after a few more rock cuttings, the plateau level is reached.
12·1	234·5	Kissir (3,090 ft.) ..	Stone station, one siding of 250 yards. Undulating fertile country now well cultivated by the Circassian colony of Amman. Some cuttings in whitish rock. Undulating country; cultivation and grazing in spring. Steady descending gradient round a wide loop for 3 kilom. of 1/70 to 1/80.
14·3	248·8	Lobben (2,537 ft.) ..	Station building and one siding of 250 yards near some ruins. Some cultivation. Good grazing in spring, when the Beni Sakhr are found here. Water from cisterns.
10·9	259·7	Jiso (2,385 ft.)	Station building and one siding of 250 yards. Water tank of 25 cubic metres and windmill pump from well. Line winds over undulating desert country, crosses two wide valleys with masonry bridges of six arches of 20 ft. and three of 20 ft. Long ascent of 1/55 to 1/50, then sharp descent round a curve to
19	278·7	Debaa (2,463 ft.) ..	Station building and one siding. Pilgrim route close to west. Stone kala and a large rainwater cistern. Undulating bare country; some cuttings, but no serious gradients.
16·5	275·2	Khan Sebib (2,565 ft.) ..	Station building and one siding. No water. Two viaducts of six masonry arches of 25 ft. over dry wadis. Through undulating hills; through rock and clay cuttings for 1¼ miles. Cross another bridge of six spans of 25 ft., 30 ft. above the ravine.
14·1	309·3	Siding	Then another of six arches of 25 ft. over stony dry bed of ravine, ascends 1/60 up its left bank. These ravines run west to the Dead Sea. Line then crosses a plain 3 to 4 miles wide.
17·1	326·4	Katrane	Larger stone station building. Two sidings of 250 yards each. A goods shed and platform 25 yards long and 3½ ft. high. Little trade at present. Important as the station for Kerak, six hours to the west, a seat of Government of a Mutessarif and garrisoned by one battalion. Pilgrim route passes close to west. A large reservoir here, stone lined with cement, 70 yards by 50 yards, 36,000 cubic metres capacity. Supply depends on rainfall. Windmill pump on it supplies two water tanks of 25 cubic metres each.
22	348·4	Siding	Skew arch stone bridge of 25 ft. each just outside station over dry stream bed, which is dammed to fill reservoir when it rains.

Distances in Kilometres.		Stations.	Details of Line.
Intermediate.	Total.		
18·7	367·1	Siding	Steepish ascent of 1/50 for short way, then over undulating country. Long descent of 1/55 into El Hasa Valley, the head of the Wadi Kerrahi. Through two deep rock cuttings.
10·7	377·8	El Hasa (2,696 ft.) ..	Station building and one siding of 250 yards. Water tank and well with good supply 80 ft. below surface, drawn by windmill pump. Cross dry bed of wadi by three masonry arches of 25 ft. Ascends 1/66 out of valley, winding up a tributary ravine, then over plain, stony and strewn with black pebbles of obsidian; bare of vegetation.
19·6	397·4	Jauf-ed-Dervish (3,220 ft.)	Station building and one siding of 250 yards. No water. Old kala on the pilgrim route. Line ascends long gradient of 1/80 out of station; skirts deep ravine, then along stony, undulating plain, bare of vegetation. A flat topped range of hills is skirted some 3 miles to the east.
25·2	422·6	Anaize (3,448 ft.) ..	Station building and one siding of 250 yards. Some cultivation on pilgrim route close by; no water otherwise.
..	459·14	Maan (3,540 ft.) ..	An important depôt, with good water supply from wells. Extensive sidings. Engine shed, turntable, coaling depôt, repairing shop, small goods shed. A good hotel, with ten bed rooms, kept by a Greek. The construction offices for the line to the south are installed here. The two villages comprising Maan (Maan-esh-Shamie and Maan-Misrie) the first of about 200 houses, and the southern or principal one, Maan-Misrie, of 500 houses, each with a good water supply from springs in limestone; used to irrigate some gardens and cultivation. The seat of a Government. A strong garrison of two companies and a depôt of supplies for the posts on the Akaba route. A military hospital of 100 beds, near the station. Inhabitants of Maan are settled Arabs. Leaving Maan, line ascends over a low col and then a long descent over stony, bare desert, with numerous dry wadis, all bridged with stone culverts of 3 metres, and two or three arches each. Towards the east, in the Besme Hills, are several small springs and fairly settled Arabs to be found. To the south-west the country is nearly waterless, and practically uninhabited.
15·86	475·10	Ghadr-el-Haj (3,270 ft.) ..	Station buildings under construction; at present only two tents. One siding 250 yards long. No natural water supply; seven barrels sunk in the ground and replenished by passing trains. A few trees and scrubs in the vicinity. Country stony, waterless desert, with several small wadis. The pilgrim route follows the railway closely.
12·15	487·15	Bir Shaibe (3,250 ft.) ..	Stone station building to hold ten men. No other buildings; one siding. No natural water supply; seven barrels sunk in ground. Country more accidented; several small wadis.
..	495	Guard House	Stone guard house. Water from barrels. No siding.
..	501	Guard House	Two guard tents. Water from barrels. No siding.
..	506	Bridge	Across larger wadi by six masonry arches of 20 ft. each.

Distances in Kilometres.		Stations.	Details of Line.
Intermediate.	Total.		
..	507	Guard House	Two guard tents. Water from barrels. No siding. To the east a jagged line of hills is visible, 30 to 40 miles off. To the west, level stony desert. A few low trees and shrubs in the wadis.
26·35	514·50	Akaba (3,630 ft.) ..	The complete name is Akaba-i-Hojazie to distinguish it from the Akaba on the Red Sea, which is Akaba-Misrie. Two station buildings of stone, no others. A siding of 200 yards. Pilgrim route; several parallel tracks just traceable over the desert; skirts the line. Line ascends to a broad col skirting a wadi bordered by a few shrubs. Then descends rather more steeply, following a stony ravine.
6	520·50	Batn-el-Ghrul (3,710 ft.)	Station with one siding and two stone houses. No natural water supply. Six barrels sunk in ground On a small plateau commanding a fine view of all the descent of the Batn-el-Ghrul escarpment, which here falls away in easier slopes, and permits of the pilgrim route descending. This is passable for wheels. For some 30 miles to the east, and for some distance to the west, there is practically no other way of descending the escarpment, which is a line of lime-stone and sandstone cliffs, 300 ft. to 400 ft., the total descent being 500 ft. The line curves sharply on leaving the station, and com-mences descent parallel to hillside, making a wide lo p to the west. Ruling gradient, 18/1,000. Another sharp curve at end of loop. No bridges, only some small stone culverts. Some cuttings through brilliant coloured sandstones.
..	524	.. ..	Foot of main descent. Line follows a valley 2 miles wide, bordered with black rocks of fantastic shapes on the west, and limestone and sandstone on the east. Valley bed is drift-sand and stones, and known as the Wadi Rutm.
9·65	530·15	Wadi Rutm (3,215 ft.) ..	Station with one siding and two stone houses. Stone water tank unused. No natural water supply. Six barrels sunk in ground.
..	533	.. ..	The valley opens out. Line passes over stony desert with much drift sand. Isolated rocky pinnacles appear to the west, beyond which, some 30 miles off, is the coast range, a very rugged line of hills with sharply outlined summits and many crags and pin-nacles. Extensive view to the south-east over the plain with several isolated ridges. Pilgrim route and telegraph continue parallel to the west of the line.
16·41	546·56	Tel Shajm (2,770 ft.) ..	One station building and a siding. No natural water supply. Six barrels in ground. Line of low rugged hills 2 miles to west; fantastic shapes.
9·84	555·40	Ramle (2,625 ft.) ..	One station building and a siding. No natural water supply; six barrels.
16·90	572·30	Kalaat - i - Mudoverre or Medauara (2,845 ft.)	The old kala is among rocky hills 3 miles to the west and not visible from the station. It has a fair well, and the pilgrim route and telegraph pass that way. Station has two stone buildings with two sidings of 200 yards each. There is a well with water 80 feet below the surface, drawn up by a windmill pump. Supply only fair. Two galvanised iron tanks, holding 50 cubic metres, on a stone tower. Engine shed for two engines, disused. Disappointing as a station owing to poor water supply.

Distances in Kilometres.		Stations.	Details of Line
Intermediate.	Total.		
..	..	Guard Post	Two tents with three barrels let in ground as water supply; a single siding.
22·57	594·87	Haraat Ahmar (2,480 ft.)	A single station and one siding. No natural water supply—seven barrels let in ground.
.	..	Guard Post .. .	Two tents with four barrels let in the ground as water supply; a single siding.
13·80	608·67	Zat-el-Haj (2,315 ft.) ..	Station is quarter of a mile west of the old stone fort on the pilgrim route, which guards a good spring surrounded by a few date palms. Water plentiful and appears in pools between the station and the kala. A guard of six zapticha kept in the kala. Two station buildings and a siding; water had lodged in some pools along the line owing to recent rain.
9·60	632·27	Bir Hurmas (2,425 ft.) ..	A station building and one siding. Water from well, not as good as Zat-el-Haj, but fair supply, 3 feet to 4 feet below surface. One 25 cubic metre tank and windmill pump.
22·50	654·77	El Husm (2,200 ft.) ..	Station building and one siding. No natural water supply. Wide basin extends eastward to Jebel Sherors, a remarkable peak bearing 68° some 40 miles off. Through desert of sand and stones. A very rugged ridge extends west parallel to the coast.
23·13	677·90	Mahtab (2,395 ft.) ..	Station building and one siding. Well with scanty supply of brackish water.
24·38	692·28	Tebuk (2,560 ft.) ..	The first oasis of importance and a railway depôt. Station, in course of completion, will comprise engine shed and repairing shop, turntable, and general depôt. Water from a good well; water 12 ft. below surface; windmill pump which fills two tanks of 25 cubic metres each. Village of Tebuk is 1 mile to the west of the station in a group of date palms.
.	721	Wadi Atsel or El Til (2,821 ft.)	Single station building of the fortified type. No natural water supply.
24	745	Dar-el-Haj (3,050 ft.) ..	Single station building of the fortified type with one siding. No natural water supply. Tunnel of 180 metres through a limestone spur, and then in a small open basin the line reaches
11	756	Mustabi (3,115 ft.) ..	Single station building of fortified type with one siding. No natural water supply. Narrow gorge in the sandstone hills leads down to Kelaat-i-Akhdar, called the Bogaz-el-Akhdar.
5	761	Kelaat - i - Akhdar (El Khuthr) (2,920 ft.)	A castle or "kala" on the pilgrim road, situated in a narrow valley with sandstone ridges on either hand. A few trees and bushes. This place has the reputation of possessing the best water on the Haj road. Water is from a shallow well inside the kala, raised by a noria wheel worked by mules and run into cisterns, three in front and three to the west. Station building of the fortified type. El Khuthr is the name given by the nomads.
22	783	Khams (3,035 ft.) ..	Station at Wadi Sani. No water. A few acacia trees alongside the wadi.

Distances in Kilometres.		Stations.	Details of Line.
Intermediate.	Total.		
	806	Dizad (3,100 ft.) ..	A station to the north end of the Wadi Sani; some acacia trees and bushes in the dry bed of the wadi. No water.
23	829	Muadhem (3,250 ft.) ..	A castle or "kala" on the pilgrim road, with a large "birket" or cistern to catch rain water. The Fejir and Khuthera sections of the Beni Atie Bedouins roam about here.
26	854	Khat-um-Zane (3,480 ft.)	A station in sandy valley between cliffs. No water.
27	881	Dar-ul-Hamra (3,710 ft.). .	Ruinous "kala" or castle on the pilgrim road. A cistern or "birket" in the bed of a wadi filled by the uncertain winter rains. Usually dry or very bad.
24	905	El Matalli (3,640 ft.) ..	Sandstone crags and deep sandy stretches. Through the Shuk-el-Ajuz a pass in rough sandstone ridges. No water.
14	919	Abu-Taka (3,150 ft.) ..	A station in country dotted with sandstone crags. No water.
14	931	El Mezham (2,985 ft.) ..	A narrow pass between sandstone hills skirting round the western face of the Mabrak-en-Naka, a steep sandstone ridge. No water; a few scattered acacia trees and bushes. Descent into the Medain-i-Salih Plain.
24	955	Medain-i-Salih (El Hejr) (2,600 ft.)	A castle or kala on the pilgrim road, in the court-yard of which is the Bir-en-Naga, a well with water 25 ft. below ground. A cistern 18 yards by 22 yards and 18 ft. deep lies to the south, filled by a noria wheel from the well, worked by two mules. Water bad, and supply poor. The Fejir Bedouin are in this neighbourhood.
..	1,015	El Ula (2,035 ft.) ..	Small walled town of some 400 houses or 2,000 inhabitants, in an oasis of date palms about 2 miles long. Some corn cultivated. Dates are fairly plentiful. A track leads to El Wej, on the Red Sea. The town is walled, with two main gates, and built against the steep cliff of the Harra. Water is plentiful from a series of springs, slightly warm, in the Wadi-el-Kurra. A small stream irrigates the gardens. A few cattle, donkeys, goats, and poultry available. A railway depôt similar to Maan and Tebuk is proposed here.
..	1,030	Kala Zumrud (2,165 ft.) ..	Kala, on the pilgrim route, with cisterns in a narrow, rocky, gorge.
..	1,135	Hedie (1,250 ft.) ..	Kala, on the pilgrim route. Well, with fair supply. One day's march from Kheibar.
..	1,300	Medina (1,320 ft.) ..	

Haifa–Deraa Branch.

Distances in Kilometres.		Stations.	Details of Line.
Intermediate.	Total.		
..	..	Haifa	New station approaching completion, with approach from the town and the Nazareth Road. Repairing shops. Engine shed for eight engines. Turntable and water tank, with supply by a pump from well just north of station. Siding runs to pier, now 350 yards long (see Report on Haifa and landing places). Line skirts along foot of Carmel parallel to the Nazareth Road. Wide cultivated plain to north.
11	11	Shemanie	Small stone station building. No siding at station. Line adjoins Nazareth Road, near Zahluk. Disused siding some 600 yards long runs across road to some quarries at the foot of Carmel, not now worked. Siding disconnected, but could be connected easily again. Nazareth Road crosses railway, which continues through some slight cuttings in clay.
		Bridge: Nahr-el-Mokatta (Kishon)	Crosses the Nahr-el-Mokatta (Kishon) by a masonry bridge of six 20-ft. arches. Nazareth Road crosses 100 yards lower down by three 25-ft. arches. Stream 25 to 30-ft. wide and 18-in. to 2-ft. deep in spring, nearly dry in summer. Through defile 1¼ miles wide, having the steep, rocky slopes of Carmel to south and the spurs of the low wooded hills of El Harithie to north. Emerges into wide plain of Merg-Ami (Plain of Jezreel or Esdraelon). Rich black soil, well cultivated.
..	22	Tel-esh-Shemmam ..	Stone station building with one siding of 250 yards. Tracks over plain very heavy after rain. Unmetalled tract to Jaida, on the Nazareth Road.
..	32	Water Station	Water tank of 25 cubic metres, and pump. Through deep cutting in clay for 200 yards.
..	36·3	Afule (266 ft.) .. .	Stone station building, goods shed, and one siding of 300 yards. Partially metalled chaussée from Jenin to Nazareth crosses here with telegraph (three wires) from Jerusalem and Nablus. Afule (1,500 inhabitants; water from well) and Fule are villages close by. Line crosses imperceptible watershed between the Mediterranean and the Jordan depression. Tracks run in all directions across plain in fine weather, but after rain, are impassable for wheels. Plain marshy in places.
14·7	51	Shatta (260 ft.)	Stone station building, one siding of 300 yards, and water tank. Village of 800 inhabitants, is quarter of a mile to north, on broad slopes of orange. Valley about a mile broad; well cultivated.
.	59	Beisan (398 ft.) .	Large village 1 mile to the east, situated near some large springs. Seat of a Mudir. Surrounding district and up to Lake Tiberias belongs to the Sultan's Civil List. Stone station building (two storied); one siding of 300 yards. Line descends well-cultivated valley with some small streams, which soon opens into the wide Jordan valley. Line bends to the south; gradual descent; unmetalled track; generally parallel; 1/100 to 1/150 gradient.

Distances in Kilometres. Intermediate.	Distances in Kilometres. Total.	Stations.	Details of Line.
17·3	76·3	Jisr-i-Mejamie Station (809 ft.)	Stone station building, one siding of 300 yards, and a water tank. Unmetalled track leading to bridge over the Jordan passes close to station. Large accumulation of rails and steel sleepers remain piled near the station.
..	..	Jisr-i-Mejamie Bridge (845 ft.)	Bridge over the Jordan of six masonry arches of 10 ft. (12 metres) each. Bed of stream, rocks and shingle; unfordable except in late summer. There is a road bridge half-a-mile up stream of one 40-ft. masonry arch.
		Jisr-i-Delhamie ..	Line continues parallel to the left bank of the Jordan through some small cuttings in clay, and embankments. Crosses the Sheriat-i-Menadere (Yarmuk) River, close to its junction with the Jordan, by one span of 165 ft. (50 metres) on stone abutments, some 45 ft. above water. Stream here in a narrow, rocky rift, 200 yards below a series of small waterfalls. Bridge difficult to repair if broken. Commanded from foot hills across Jordan at 1,200 yards range. Road bridge, an old causeway partially washed away, with a series of several irregular masonry arches, up stream 300 yards.
		Delhamie	Pass Delhami village of fifty houses, close to left. The Jewish Settlement of Bakra, visible 1½ miles to left, at foot of hills. Through some small clay cuttings, then over open cultivated plain of the Jordan.
		Samakh (665 ft.) ..	An important station on the southern shore of the Lake of Tiberias (Bahr-i-Tuburia); a large railway depôt before the long ascent of the Yarmuk Valley. Stone station building, two stories; engine shed for two engines; turntable; coal-loading stage and small depôt of coal; goods shed, with loading platform 40 yards long; four sidings of 400 yards each; about 5,000 steel sleepers and 1,000 rails stacked at south side of station awaiting transport; water tank of 2·25 cubic metres; tank with water cranes fed by steam pump on edge of lake. Lake water excellent for drinking. Village of Samakh, mostly of Algerian emigrants and Arabs; 150 houses; some cultivation; wood landing stage 50 yards long. Steam-launch to hold twenty-five passengers, makes trip to Tiberias in 1½ hours. Sailing and row boats also employed. Track passable for wheels along shore; ferry or ford in summer over the Jordan at Bahr-i-Tam. Continue across plain to mouth of Yarmuk Valley. Arab and local name is Sheriat-el-Mendereye, not Yarmuk; but the latter is all one used by railway people. Mouth of valley rather narrow—1 mile across—with steep hills on either side. River in narrow, rocky bed with cliffs 10 ft. to 50 ft. high. Line skirts the right or north bank some cutting in whitish clay and soft rock.
..	92	2nd Yarmuk Bridge ..	Crosses to left bank by iron girder bridge of three spans on stone piers, some 40 ft. above water level. Central span of 165 ft. (50 metres) lattice girder, with a span of 98 ft. (30 metres) on either side. Also four arches of 20 ft. (6 metres) of masonry next the left bank. Bridges are usually known by their numbers by the railway authorities, and these have been retained.

Distances in Kilometres. Intermediate.	Distances in Kilometres. Total.	Stations.	Details of Line.
1	93	3rd Yarmuk Bridge ..	Across the upper bend of the same loop and 1 kilom. higher is the third bridge of exactly similar construction, except that there are no masonry arches next the left bank. Basalt and white rock cliffs on the right bank below the bridge.
2	95	El Hemme Station (476 ft.)	Line enters small flat space in a loop of the stream with steep clay slope to north, in which is small station of El Hemme—one low building and a siding of 250 yards. Hot springs of El Hemme, no village, on the far bank; village of Umkeis on the height 1½ miles to south.
1	96	4th Yarmuk Bridge ..	Recrosses to left bank at eastern end of loop by another girder bridge similar to the above of one central span of 165 ft. and two of 98 ft., on stone piers some 30 feet above the water. Stream bed opens out now—slopes easier.
1	100	5th Yarmuk Bridge ..	Crosses to right bank by iron girder bridge similar to others of one central span of 165 ft. and two of 98 ft. Deep cutting [illegible] on the left bank in a spur which [illegible] on that side. Continues along right bank; cutting in steep slope.
5	105	1st Tunnel	Tunnel, about 280 yards long, in soft rock and shale, lined with stone through [illegible] rock-spur, which overhangs the river. Tunnels are numbered on the keystone of the arch on the outside in Turkish figures.
1	106	6th Yarmuk Bridge ..	Masonry bridge of six arches of 10 ft. (12 metres). Valley widens somewhat. Rail level, 20 ft. above water.
1	107	Wadi Kilit Station ..	Small station building, one siding of 250 yards, in an open space. No village in vicinity. Steep foot tracks lead up the side of the valley. Mouth of Wadi Kilit on left bank close by station. Line continues winding along the foot of the steep slope.
7	114	7th Yarmuk Bridge (El Kuyo Bridge)	Masonry bridge of five arches of 40 ft. (12 metres) in a small open loop. Very steep slopes on either side of the main valley. Some footpaths lead to the plateau above.
..	116	Sea Level	This is also called the El Kuyo Bridge. Line reaches sea level again out of Jordan depression.
5	119	Esh Shejara Station (89 ft.)	Small station building in steep slope. No siding. Village 4 kilom. distant on plateau. Steep foot track.
2	121	8th Yarmuk Bridge ..	Masonry bridge of seven spans of 10 ft. (12 metres) over a side ravine usually dry. Piers 35 ft. high in centre.
½	121·5	9th Yarmuk Bridge ..	Crosses left bank of [illegible] by masonry bridge of [illegible] arches of 10 ft. (12 metres).
3½	125	Mokarin Station (236 ft.)	Small station building, one siding of 200 yards in a small open plateau.
2	127	10th Yarmuk Bridge ..	Line crosses to right bank just above the junction of the Wadi Ahtar by three masonry arches of 10 ft. (12 metres), with a span of 20 ft. (6 metres) at each end.

Distances in Kilometres.		Stations.	Details of Line.
Intermediate.	Total.		
1	128	2nd Tunnel	Through steep spur of soft white rock and shale 250 yards long. Enters the Wadi Ahrar and commences a long loop up it, returning at a higher level in the 4th tunnel, which is superimposed above the 2nd in the same spur but a little farther east.
½	128·5	11th Bridge	Railway crosses to right bank of Wadi Ahrar by masonry bridge of three arches of 40 ft. (12 metres). Piers 25 ft. above rocky bed of stream.
1½	130	12th Bridge	Crosses left bank of Wadi Ahrar at the top of the loop by a masonry bridge of three 40 ft. (12 metres) spans. Ascends steady grade.
1	131	3rd Tunnel	Through tunnel in spur of whitish rock, stone lined. About 200 yards long, high up the slope of the Wadi Ahrar.
1	132	4th Tunnel	Curved tunnel of 280 yards in the same spur as the 2nd but higher. Re-enters the Yarmuk Valley high up the slope. Steep cutting with a wall of rock on the north side. Falls of rock frequently block the line here.
4	136	Zeezun Station (823 ft.) ..	Small station building on steep hillside. No room for siding. Water tank. Good supply from spring at village on plateau just above. Steep track leads up to it.
1	137	5th Tunnel	Through spur of soft rock 250 yards long, stone lined.
1	138	6th Tunnel	Through similar spur 300 yards long, stone lined.
2	140	13th Yarmuk Bridge ..	Crosses to left bank of river, just under Tel-esh-Shehab village and waterfall, by important bridge of iron girder and masonry spans, one central span of 165 ft. lattice iron girder underneath rail level, with three masonry spans of 40 ft. at either side at the abutments. Line ascends the Wadi Meddan, making a long loop up it, and reaching Tel-esh-Shehab village, which overlooks this bridge. Steepest gradient is ascent in this loop.
½	140·5	14th Bridge	Crosses to right bank of the Wadi Meddan by masonry bridge of one central span of 40 ft., with three of 20 ft. on either side. Pier 35 ft. high. Continues in steep cutting up side of wadi.
2	142·5	15th Bridge	Sharp curved loop crosses valley. Bridge of one central span of 40 ft., with one of 20 ft. on either side over rocky bed of stream.
..	142·75	7th Tunnel .. .	Immediately after bridge line enters the 7th tunnel on a curve 120 yards long. Ascends other side of loop, several steep cuttings in soft rock and clay.
2½	145	Tel-esh-Shehab Station ..	Reaches summit of ascent and the Hauran plateau, close to the village of Tel-esh-Shehab. 100 houses close to north. Good water supply from springs One siding of 250 yards. Small station building.
4	149	Mezerib	Stone station building and one siding of 250 yards. Water tank of 20 cubic metres, fed by steam pump from Mezerib Lake, 1 mile to the north. Connecting branch with French line about 1 mile long, now interrupted for short distance. Mecca pilgrim route crosses at a level crossing ¼ mile east of station.
12	161	Derna..	Junction with main line.

[25034] No. 42*.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(*Received July 27.*)

India Office, July 26, 1907.

Sir,

IN continuation of the papers inclosed in the letter from this Office of the 15th June last regarding the Abu Musa Red Oxide Concession, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Morley to forward herewith, for submission to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a letter from the Government of India reporting their proceedings in the matter, and stating their views as to the course which should be followed.

Sir E. Grey will observe that the Concession under which certain Arabs had granted a lease amounting to a monopoly to Herr Wönckhaus has been cancelled by the Sheikh of Shargah, and that to avoid misconceptions which might arise if the rights enjoyed by Herr Wönckhaus should be at once transferred to Messrs. Strick, that firm have been asked through their local agents to defer any action with regard to the Abu Musa mines for the present.

As regards future arrangements, it will be seen that the Government of India think that the Sheikh should not be allowed to grant any monopoly, and that he should be advised to submit to the Political Resident the draft of any new contract into which he may propose to enter.

Subject to Sir E. Grey's concurrence, Mr. Morley proposes to approve the action proposed by the Government of India, and to request them not to sanction any Concession which the Sheikh may propose to grant without reporting the matter home, with reference to any change that may have occurred in the local circumstances, and any representations that may have been received from Herr Wönckhaus. Messrs. Strick may at the same time be requested, as suggested by the Government of India, to postpone, at any rate until the end of the current year, action under any contract they may contemplate negotiating with the Sheikh for oxide from the Abu Musa mines.

I am, &c.

(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 42*.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Secret.) *Simla, June 27, 1907.*

Sir,

WE have the honour to forward a copy of correspondence on the subject of the red oxide deposits at Abu Musa Island belonging to the Sheikh of Shargah.

2. In 1898 the Sheikh granted a lease of the red oxide mines to one Haji Hassan-bin-Abi-Samaiyeh, a resident at Lingah, his son Abdulla, and a third person Esa bin-Abdul Latif. In December 1901 on the strength of a report from the British Agent at Lingah to the effect that Herr Robert Wönckhaus, the representative of a German firm in Bahrein, had contemplated visiting Abu Musa with a view to taking up the export of red oxide, the Sheikh of Shargah and the concessionnaires were specifically warned by the Political Resident against entering into any agreement with the trader in question for the purpose. The Sheikh had, indeed, already received a general warning in 1898 from the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf not to grant trade monopolies without consulting him. Nevertheless on the 1st June, 1906, Hassan Samaiyeh, claiming to act for his two partners, entered into a contract with Herr Wönckhaus granting to the latter a monopoly of purchase of the output of the red oxide mined on the island for four years, with preferential option to renew the contract at the end of that period.

3. When reporting the circumstances connected with the execution of the contract Major Cox urged that, in view of the political importance of preventing the acquisition by Germany of vested rights in the Gulf, an attempt should be made to extinguish the Concession which had been secured by Herr Wönckhaus. The Government of India agreed with Major Cox as to the desirability of getting the monopoly cancelled, and they accordingly requested him to ascertain from the Sheikh of Shargah whether Hassan Samaiyeh had any authority from him to enter into the contract with

Herr Wönckhaus, and, if so, why he had acted in this matter in contravention of the known wishes of the Government of India. Major Cox was also instructed to remind the Sheikh that, but for the action of the British Government in insisting upon the removal of the Persian flag from Abu Musa, the Sheikh would have had no authority on the island, and the Concession could never have been worked. Major Cox was requested, in replying, also to report the result of the advice which it was understood that he had already offered to Esa-bin-Abdul Latif, the third partner in the Concession.

4. The Political Resident, in his letter dated the 28th February, 1907, stated that, on ascertaining the terms of the contract which had been entered into with Herr Wönchhaus, both the Sheikh and the concessionnaire Esa-bin-Abdul Latif were unwilling that it should stand. Ultimately the Sheikh decided, in view of Hassan Ali Samaiyeh's unauthorized action, to withdraw the Concession from the three concessionnaires, and intimated that he desired to make fresh provisions for the working of the red oxide mines under the advice of the Government of India.

5. On the 21st May the Political Resident telegraphed that the Sheikh had taken active steps to prevent further mining operations by the concessionnaires' men, and that Messrs. Strick, the British lessees of the Hormuz red oxide mines, seemed inclined to commence negotiations with a view to the purchase of Abu Musa oxide. We considered it undesirable, however, that the rights of which Herr Wönckhaus had been dispossessed should simultaneously be transferred to Messrs. Strick, as such an arrangement might create a false impression, that the Sheikh's action had been inspired by us with a view to benefit the British merchant. We therefore replied to Major Cox that Messrs. Strick's Bushire agent should be asked to inform his principals that it would be convenient if they deferred any action with regard to the Abu Musa mines for the present.

6. We trust that you approve the action taken by us in the matter, and, if so, we venture to suggest that Messrs. Strick should be advised to postpone bringing into force till the end of the current year any contract that they may contemplate making with the Sheikh of Shargah.

We may add that the Political Resident has been instructed to be careful to assume no responsibility for action already taken by the Sheikh, and he has advised the latter to show him the draft of any new contract which it may be proposed to grant in place of the old Concession.

We have, &c.

(Signed) MINTO.
KITCHENER.
H. ERLE RICHARDS.
E. N. BAKER.
C. H. SCOTT.
H. ADAMSON.
J. P. FINLAY.
J. O. MILLER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 42*.

Extract from the Diary of the Persian Gulf Political Residency for the week ending February 19, 1906.

BUSHIRE.

16. *February* 10.—The Resident recently asked the Residency Agent on the Arab Coast to warn the Chief of Shargah and his uncle, Sheikh Salem, against entering into any agreement with M. R. Wönckhaus of the German trading firm for leasing the red oxide mines on Abu Musa. The Agent now reports that the Sheikhs have assured him that they will do nothing without the Resident's knowledge.

Inclosure 3 in No. 42*.

Extract from the Diary of the Persian Gulf Political Residency for the week ending August 5, 1906.

LINGAH.

897. Captain Wehr, the German who was said to be an officer in the German navy (*vide* paragraph 789), arrived in Lingah on the 23rd July from Bushire. He hired a boat on the 24th and left for Bin Musa Island accompanied by Mr. Brown, of the firm of Messrs. Wönckhaus and Co. It is reported that on his return he will visit Bunder Abbas, Hormuz, Larak, Kishm, Henjam, Bushire, Bussorah, and Bagdad.

(*Bushire note.*—Captain Wehr arrived at Bushire on the 30th July and intends going on to Bussorah.)

Inclosure 4 in No. 42*.

Extract from the Diary of the Persian Gulf Political Residency for the week ending August 12, 1906.

BUSHIRE.

939. According to a report furnished to the Residency Agent, Lingah, by the Nakhoda whose dhow carried them, Captain Wehr and Mr Brown (paragraph 897) visited Dehai, Shargah, and Ajman on the Trucial Coast, and, on their return journey, Abu Musa Island. At all these places they are said to have taken rough soundings, and at Abu Musa they landed and inspected the island and red oxide deposits. They returned to Lingah from Abu Musa on the 28th and Captain Wehr caught the mail for Bushire the same day. While at Bushire he stayed with the German Consul, Dr. Listemann, and left for Bussorah by mail on the 8th instant. He proves to be a Commander in the employ of the Hamburg-American Line, and, according to information from German sources, has been sent on in advance to examine the various anchorages in order to be able to advise the commander of the "Canadia" on matters of navigation on her entering the Gulf. The vessel in question is said to be a craft of the pattern of the Strick liners. She is believed to have left Hamburg on the 14th July, and is expected in the Gulf during the last week of August.

940. The Resident has received information since his return from India that Herr Wönckhaus has subleased from the inhabitant of Lingah, who farms it from the Sheikh of Shargah, the Concession for the quarrying and export of red oxide from Abu Musa.

Inclosure 5 in No. 42°.

Government of India to Major Cox.

Simla, September 25, 1906.

(Telegraphic.)

YOUR diary of the 12th August. Please report early whether information in paragraph 940 is well founded. If so, who was the Lingah lessee, and how has lease been transferred despite the warning conveyed by you last year and reported in diary of the 19th February, 1905, paragraph 16?

Inclosure 6 in No. 42°.

Major Cox to Government of India.

Bushire, October 28, 1906.

(Confidential.)

AS I am on the point of leaving head-quarters, I have the honour to send a further *ad interim* reply to the inquiry made in Foreign Department telegram, dated the 25th September, on the subject of the agreement effected between Herr Wönckhaus and the concessionnaires of the red oxide deposits at Abu Musa Island, belonging to the Sheikh of Shargah.

2. I have ascertained from the Residency Agent at Shargah that neither the Sheikh of Shargah nor his son Esa-bin-Abdul Latif, who was one of the three parties participating in the original Concession from the late Sheikh Salim-bin-Sultan, had any knowledge of the agreement entered into with Herr Wönckhaus by the Lingah partner, Hassan Samaiyeh. I have accordingly instructed both the Shargah and the Lingah agents to endeavour to obtain a copy of the document drawn, but I have not yet received one from either quarter, and meanwhile I learn from another source that Hassan Samaiyeh refuses to produce it on the grounds that he was strictly enjoined by the German to show it to no one. As one of the original concessionnaires, Esa-bin-Abdul Latif, has not been a party to any sub-lease of the Concession as a whole, and as Sheikh Sagar and the said concessionnaires, at my direction last year, were warned not to enter into relations with any foreign subject, it is hardly likely that any document has been passed for the transfer of the Concession bodily; on the other hand, the apparently persistent refusal of Hassan Samaiyeh to produce the document necessarily arouses suspicion, and from what he has written to his friends here it would appear that he has at any rate bound himself to Herr Wönckhaus for a term of four years in such a way that he cannot sell any of the output to other parties.

3. Such action, if my information proves to be true, could, I should think, be regarded as a violation of the conditions on which the Concession was given and would warrant its withdrawal, but the Government of India will be better able to arrive at a decision on this point when the complete facts are before them.

I had hoped to be in a position to submit a full Report before leaving, but up to the last minute no reply has been received from the Lingah agent, who is no doubt experiencing difficulty in prevailing upon Hassan Samaiyeh to show him the document.

4. I should mention in conclusion that Hassan Samaiyeh can be treated as a British subject. His father was born in Bahrein and afterwards obtained British naturalization papers in Bombay, where he resided for some years; and it appears from the records of the Residency that on the above grounds Hassan and his son have been in the habit of preferring their claims against Persian authorities or subjects through the British Residency.

Inclosure 7 in No. 42*.

Major Cox to Government of India.

Bushire, November 29, 1906.

(Confidential.)

IN continuation of my letter dated the 28th October, 1906, I now have the honour to submit the Report called for on the subject of Herr Wönckhaus' acquisition of rights in regard to the red oxide deposits at Abu Musa.

2. In order to place the case completely before Government, it is necessary to give briefly the early history of the Concession.

The present Sheikh of Shargah, Sagar-bin-Khalid, supplanted his uncle Salim-bin-Sultan, as ruling Sheikh, in March 1883. Sheikh Salim, realizing that he had no following, accepted the inevitable, and has since become a pensioner enjoying more or less friendly relations with his nephew.

In the summer of 1898, Sheikh Sagar went on a pilgrimage to Mecca, leaving his uncle above mentioned in charge of his administration at Shargah, and the latter while acting in this capacity granted a lease of the red oxide mines on Abu Musa Island to three persons, as follows:—

(1.) Haji Hassan-bin-Ali Samaiyeh, resident in Lingah and agent for the Bombay and Persian Steam Navigation Company at that port. This individual is by origin a Bahreini, and has in the past claimed and received British protection on the strength of a naturalization certificate granted to his father by the Government of Bombay. A separate Memorandum regarding his nationality is attached.

(2.) Abdulla-bin Haji Hassan, son of the above.

(3.) Esa bin-Abdul Latif, son of the Residency Agent, Shargah.

A translation of the document granting the original Concession accompanies. This is the Concession to which Colonel Meade referred on page 10 of the Persian Gulf Administration Report for 1898–9. The chief thing to remark in it is that no limit of time is stipulated for on one side or the other. It would have been simpler if Sheikh Sagar's attention had been drawn to this on his return from the Haj, but, such as it is,

the Agreement must be held to have been endorsed by Sheikh Sagar's subsequent action or inaction.

3. In December 1904, on the strength of a Report from our Agent at Lingah, to the effect that Herr Wönckhaus contemplated visiting Abu Musa with a view to taking up the export of red oxide, instructions were immediately issued to the Residency Agent at Shargah; and it will be seen from his two letters, of which translations are inclosed, that both the Sheikh of Shargah and the concessionnaires received specific warning against entering into any ill-considered compact with the German firm. The next information which I received on the subject reached me by accident on my return from India in August last, and it was the entry in the diary of this Residency for the 12th August which originated the present correspondence. The foregoing details bring the case up to the present time.

4. Referring now to my *ad interim* Report No. 2577 of the 28th October, 1906, I have the honour to report that after much fencing on the part of Hassan Samaiyeh, I have at length received a certified copy of the Agreement between him and Herr Wönckhaus, and append a duplicate of it. It will be seen that it has been executed by Haji Hassan Samaiyeh, claiming to act for his two partners, and gives to Herr Wönckhaus a specific monopoly of the output for four years, with preferential option to renew at the end of that period. The Lingah Agent, in forwarding it, states that Haji Hassan asserts that "he has purchased the Chief of Shargah's share and holds a writing to that effect from the Chief." I am at a loss to know what that means, but am taking steps to ascertain.

In any case, the concessionnaires have behaved in a hole-and-corner and obstructive way and deserve no consideration from us, and it remains for Government to consider whether steps should not be taken to upset the arrangement. It is probable that Messrs. Strick and Co. would be quite ready to take up the trade on terms equally advantageous, for the Government of India will note from the papers forwarded to me under Foreign Department, endorsement No. 4213-E.A., dated 22nd November, 1905, that they are paying to the Moin-ut-Tujjar for the Hormuz product more than double the rate obtained by Haji Hassan from Herr Wönckhaus. In fact, I understand that Messrs. Strick were on the point of making the Shargah concessionnaires an offer, when they were forestalled by the German firm.

5. The following arguments suggest themselves to me in connection with the possible withdrawal of the Concession:—

(*a.*) Hassan Samaiyeh, if taxed with disregard of Sheikh Sagar's interest or instructions, or of the wishes of the Residency, would no doubt argue that nothing had been permanently alienated, his Agreement with Herr Wönckhaus merely providing for a sale of prospective produce.

(*b.*) The Agreement (*vide* opening lines) purports to be executed between Herr Wönckhaus and "Mr. Hassan-bin-Semey" as "owner and holder of the Bu Musa Concession," and him only. At the end it is signed solely by the said Hassan, but he adds the words "wa shūrqāhū ("and his partners") after his signature. It is understood that Hassan has always been the working partner, but it is doubtful whether he carries any document authorizing him to enter into written and unlimited contracts without consulting the other parties. His son Abdulla would, of course, express cognizance and approval of his father's action, but the third sharer, Esa-bin-Abdul Latif, was apparently not consulted, and would no doubt record his dissent if advised to do so.

(*c.*) In view of advice given to the Trucial Sheikhs in time past by the Residency, warning them against the grant of monopolies without reference to Bushire, the fact that an unlimited monopoly has been granted would afford the Sheikh of Shargah reasonable grounds for cancelling the Concession.

(*d.*) But it would seem to be unnecessary for the Sheikh, should he agree to cancel it, to introduce any reference to instructions or advice received from the Resident; for, seeing that the original Concession provided no time limit on either side, there seems to be nothing to prevent Sheikh Sagar from withdrawing it at will, on any reasonable grounds; and these certainly exist in the fact that the commercial value of the red oxide has lately increased to an extent which makes the rent paid by the concessionnaires (250 dollars per annum) ridiculously small. Sheikh Sagar's object in resuming control of the red oxide export would be with a view to working it directly for his own benefit in association with Messrs. F. C. Strick and Co., or some other British firm as his managing agents.

6. In short, there would seem to be no practical difficulty in bringing about the extinction of the Concession, it would appear to be merely a question of political feasibility which Government are in the best position to appraise.

It may be that the potential value of the red oxide deposit, which is difficult to gauge, is not of very great magnitude, but the political importance at the present juncture of preventing the acquisition by Germany of vested interests in the Gulf can hardly be questioned.

Inclosure 8 in No. 42*.

Memorandum regarding Antecedents and Nationality of Hassan-bin-Ali Samaiyeh of Lingah.

ACCORDING to a Report from the Residency Agent at Lingah, who is well acquainted with the history of the family, Ali-bin-Hamad-bin-Samaiyeh was a native of Bahrein, and emigrated to Lingah sixty years ago, during the Arab occupation, accompanied by his two sons, Hassan and Hamad, together with many other Bahreinis.

The father and sons worked for many years as nakhodas on board sailing-vessels to Indian and other ports, and for thirty years were treated like other immigrants by the Governors of Lingah, that is, as subjects of the local Sheikh.

The father, Ali, died in Lingah, and Hassan afterwards obtained a certificate of British naturalization from the Government of Bombay. In virtue of that certificate he has been considered as under British protection by the Persian authorities, and has been given the protection of the Agency.

His brother Hamad, however, is considered a Persian subject, and is only protected by the British Agency in matters in which Hassan and he are jointly concerned.

At the beginning of March 1899, when the Derya Begi retook Lingah, after some fighting with the Arab Sheikh, Mahomed-bin-Khalifah, a number of claims resulted from British subjects, among which was one from Hassan-bin-Ali Samaiyeh, who, in his Petition wrote, "Thank God, I am under the protection of the British Government, and she will not allow her subjects to be oppressed." His title to protection was in both cases tacitly accepted by the local authority, and action taken in pursuance of that title.

A claim in his name is included among a number of others, preferred by British subjects after the recapture of Lingah, in the list of cases submitted to His Majesty's Legation in August 1905, as outstanding against the Persian Government.

(Signed) P. Z. COX, *Major,*
Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

Bushire, November 29, 1906.

Inclosure 9 in No. 42*.

Agreement respecting Red Oxide Mines on Abu Musa Island, signed April 10, 1898.

(Translation.)

BE it known to all who may see this that I, Salem-bin-Sultan-bin-Sugger-el-Kasemi, let on lease all the red oxide mines situated on the Bu Musa Island to Haji Hassan-bin-Ali Samaiyeh, Abdulla-bin-Hasan and Esa-bin-Abdul Latif, from the present date for such a period as they may wish to hold the mines, provided that they should pay me 250 French dollars per annum. I have likewise arranged with them that if they wished to land "Muhar" and "Zenni" oysters in the island for commercial purposes, they should pay me landing fee at the rate of 100 dollars per annum. I have also given them permission to dig wells to supply water to their men who are working on the red oxide mines, and I will pay considerations and respects to their men who are working on the mines.

I have perhaps made out certain Agreements previous to this. They do not hold good, and this Agreement is to be acted upon.

Written in duplicate on the 18th Zilkedah, 1315 (10th April, 1898).

(Signed) SALEM-BIN-SULTAN.

Sheikh Salem-bin-Sultan confirmed the contents of this document.

Witnesses:

(Signed) AHMED-BIN-ABDUL RAHMAN.
YUSUF BIN-ABDULLA.
ABDUL LATIF-BIN-ABDUL RAHMAN.
AHMED-BIN-SULTAN.

Inclosure 10 in No. 42*.

Residency Agent, Shargah, to Major Cox.

January 16, 1905.

IN reply to your letter dated the 3rd December, 1904, I beg to inform you that, as directed by you, I informed the Chief of Shargah and his uncle Sheikh Salem-bin-Sultan that they should not enter into any agreement or arrangement with Robert Wönckhaus, the German merchant, before consulting the Resident, and that they have assured me that they would not engage in the matter without the knowledge of the Resident.

News reached me that the said Robert Wönckhaus visited Bu Musa Island, inspected the red oxide mines, &c., and left the island. The arrivals from Bu Musa report that Robert Wönckhaus had promised to return to the island in a few days.

Inclosure 11 in No. 42*.

Residency Agent, Shargah, to Major Cox.

January 18, 1905.

IN answer to your letter dated the 31st December, 1904, inclosing copy of a letter from the Residency Agent, Lingah, on the subject of the red oxide mines, &c., in Bu Musa Island, I beg to state that Sheikh Salem-bin-Sultan, Haji Hassan Samaiyeh, and their partners still continue their agreement which I had reported to you in my letter dated the 27th March, 1902, and I have not yet heard if any communications have been made between M. Wönckhaus and Sheikh Sagar and his uncle Sheikh Salem-bin-Sultan, whether direct or indirect.

I interviewed Haji Hassan-bin-Samaiyeh, and informed him of M. Robert Wönckhaus' intentions as regards the red oxide mines at Bu Musa, and my son, Isa, being one of his partners in those mines, I impressed on Haji Hassan not to enter into partnership with the said Robert Wönckhaus or any foreign merchants. Haji Hassan agreed to what I told him.

Inclosure 12 in No. 42*.

Contract between Mr. H. C. Semey, Lingah, Owner and Holder of Bu Musa Concession, and M. R. Wönckhaus, Lingah.

HASSAN C. SEMEY agrees to deliver to M. Robert Wönckhaus, Lingah, during four years beginning with the 1st June, 1906, every year 2,000 to 5,000 tons of 20 cwts. oxide of iron of the Island Bu Musa, same quality as the 700 tons shipped by M. Robert Wonckhaus in March 1905. M. Robert Wönckhaus agrees to take at least every year 2,000 tons, and if he wants so, and there is sufficient good stuff on the island of which he approves, up to 5,000 tons yearly.

The price is fixed at 15*s.* 6*d.* per ton of 20 cwts., usual weight conditions, to ship and charge free on board steamer "Bu Musa" to be weighed on board.

Hassan C. Semey gives the entire monopoly of Bu Musa oxide to Robert Wönckhaus during the terms of the contract; he is not allowed to sell or dispose of otherwise any quantity of Bu Musa during the term of this contract, but it is agreed upon that Hassan is permitted to export to India for his account during this year what he has sold already to India, and which he gives as 700 tons, and besides that every year from 1907 about 5,000 to 6,000 bags of 1 cwt. (4,000 to 5,000 [*sic*]).

Hassan Semey has to deliver daily alongside if in bags, 200 tons, or in bulk, 150 tons, weather permitting. Payment of every lot which is to be shipped, half the amount when the lot is ordered, and the other half when the lot is being shipped.

Advance to be paid by M. Robert Wönckhaus to Hassan, 2,000 rupees when ever Hassan calls for it, and receipt to be taken for it. This advance to remain with Hassan until the end of this contract.

Whenever this contract comes to an end, M. Robert Wönckhaus has the preference for a new contract of Bu Musa contract if he desires so, at same price and conditions as

at any rate at the price of other serious buyer. Alone, the English text of this contract will hold good.

(Signed) ROBERT WÖNCKHAUS.
W. E. KIRKPATRICK.

(Seal.)

(Signed) HASSAN-BIN-ALI SAMAIYEH
(and his partners.)

Copied by Sheikh Hoosain, Sub-Postmaster, Lingah.
(Signed) Sheikh HOOSAIN,
Sub-Postmaster.

Lingah, June 1, 1906.

Note.—The Residency Agent, Lingah, states that the document was in the handwriting of M. Carstein, the representative of Herr Wönckhaus, at Lingah, whose knowledge of English is crude.

Inclosure 13 in No. 42*.

Government of India to Major Cox.

(Telegraphic.) *Calcutta, December* 14, 1906.

PLEASE refer to your letter dated the 29th November regarding Abu Musa Concession. Please furnish Arabic text of Agreement of 1898, if available.

Inclosure 14 in No. 42*.

Major Cox to Government of India.

(Confidential.) *Bushire, December* 16, 1906.

I HAVE the honour to refer to paragraph 3 of my letter, dated the 29th November, 1906, on the subject of the Abu Musa Concession, in which I mentioned that I was taking steps to ascertain what Hassan Samaiyeh meant when he said that he had "purchased the Chief of Shargah's share" in it. I have since received further news from the Residency Agent at Lingah.

2. It will be remembered that the original Concession was granted by Salim-bin-Sultan on the 10th April, 1898, during Sheikh Sagar's absence. On the latter's return from Mecca he evidently claimed to become a partner in the concern, and was admitted as such by the others, but a few months later he transferred his interest in it to one Yusuf-bin-Abdullah, who again was eventually bought out by Hassan Samaiyeh in December 1900. Copies of the three documents setting forth the transfers are appended with translations.

3. I also forward a copy of the original Concession of 1898, as desired in Foreign Department telegram dated the 14th instant. In submitting it I have to request that in the translation which I furnished with my letter of the 29th ultimo, the word "mensem" may be altered to "annum." The latter word is correctly given in the translation of 1898 on my record, and that fact must account for my not having noticed the clerical error when dispatching my letter just quoted.

4. The conduct of the Residency Agent at Shargah in connection with this Concession does not appear to me blameless from the first; and although he heard of the deal with Herr Wönckhaus from Hassan Samaiyeh himself in June last, he made no report of it to me; I shall, however, address Government later in this connection, if circumstances call for it.

Inclosure 15 in No. 42*.

Translations of three Documents relating to the Concession respecting Red Oxide Mines at Abu Musa.

I.

THE object of writing this documentary Agreement is that we, the persons mentioned in this Agreement, have admitted Sheikh Suggar-bin-Khaled as a partner in the Concession of the lease of red oxide mines at Abu Musa Island, which we have leased from Sheikh Salem-bin-Sultan at 250 dollars per annum, plus 100 dollars on account of ground rent for landing Muhar and Zenni oysters, should we land any at Abu Musa Island for trade purposes. And similarly Sheikh Suggar has agreed to assist us and to endeavour with us, as far as possible, to avoid any delay in the work connected with the red oxide mines in the said island. And whatever the expenses in regard to the red oxide mine may come to, it shall be borne by all the partners and the net income shall be distributed amongst all.

This Agreement has been concluded on the above conditions, with the consent of all; so that it may not be hidden.

And Sheikh Suggar has the option to withdraw from the said Red Oxide Company if he so desire.

(Signed and sealed)—
ISA-BIN-ABDUL LATIF.
ABDULLAH-BIN-HASSAN SAMAIYEH.
HASSAN-BIN-ALI-BIN-SAMAIYEH.

Witness:
(Signed and sealed)—
ABDUL LATIF-BIN-ABDUL RAHMAN.

1 *Rabi II*, 1316 (*August* 20, 1898).

II.

Let him who reads this document know, that with reference to this Red Oxide Company which I joined, I have, by virtue of this document, transferred my share to Yusuf-bin-Abdullah, and it is vested in him and he has the disposal of it.

I have no further concern in the result whether it be profit or loss; whichever it be, it is for him.

I undertake to assist him to the best of my power, should he experience difficulty.

Let it be known accordingly.

(Signed) SUGGAR-BIN-KHALED

[illegible], 1316 (*August* 20, 1898).

III.

Yes, I, Yusuf-bin-Abdullah, have sold to Haji Hassan-bin-Ali Samaiyeh outright and completely the share in the red oxide mine mentioned in this paper, which I have acquired from Sheikh Suggar-bin-Khaled. The aforesaid share is now transferred to Haji Hassan-bin-Ali Samaiyeh, and there is left for me no claim or right therein. And I have received the sum of 100 dollars from Haji Hassan on account of the value of the share.

Let it not be hidden.

(Signed and sealed)—
YUSUF-BIN-ABDULLAH.

Witness:
(Signed and sealed)—
ABDUL LATIF-BIN-ABDUL RAHMAN.

True copy according to the original:
(Signed) HASSAN-BIN-ALI SAMAIYEH.
BAGR-BIN-MAHOMED ALES.

15 *Shaban*, 1318 (*December* 7, 1900).

Inclosure 16 in No. 42*.

Government of India to Major Cox.

(Confidential.) *Fort William, February* 11, 1907.

I AM directed to address you with reference to the correspondence ending with your letter dated the 16th December, 1906, regarding the acquisition by Herr Wönckhaus of rights in regard to the red oxide deposits at Abu Musa.

2. You consider that, as it is politically important to prevent the acquisition by Germany of vested interests in the Gulf, an attempt should be made to extinguish the Concession which has been granted to Herr Wönckhaus by Haji Hassan Samaiyeh. You point out that, in view of the advice given to the Trucial Sheikhs in time past by the Residency, warning them against the grant of monopolies without reference to Bushire, the fact that an unlimited monopoly has been granted would afford the Sheikh reasonable grounds for cancelling the Concession. You also suggest that, if the Sheikh agrees to cancel the Concession, it would be unnecessary for him to introduce any reference to the instructions or advice received from the Residency, since, as the original Concession provided no time limit on either side, there is nothing to prevent the Sheikh from withdrawing it at will.

3. The Government of India are disposed to agree with you that, as Abu Musa would form a convenient site for a coaling station in the Persian Gulf, and as the Germans have paid special attention to this island, it would be advisable, if possible, to secure at an early date the cancellation of the monopoly obtained by Herr Wönckhaus. They consider that the Concession should not have been granted, having regard to the advice which was given to the Trucial Chiefs in 1898 on the subject of the grant of monopolies and to the special warning which was conveyed to the Sheikh and his uncle in February 1905, to the effect that no agreement should be made with Herr Wönckhaus with regard to the red oxide mines on Abu Musa.

I am accordingly to request that you will ascertain from the Sheikh of Shargar whether Hassan Samaiyeh had any authority from him to enter into the contract with Herr Wönckhaus, and, if so, why he acted in this matter in contravention of the known wishes of the Government of India. The Sheikh should be reminded in this connection of the fact that, but for the action of the British Government at Abu Musa in requiring the Persians to haul down their flag, the Concession could never have been worked, as the Sheikh would have had no authority on the island. The Government of India would be glad to know the result of this reference to the Sheikh and also of the advice which it is understood you have offered to Esa-bin-Abdul Latif in regard to his share in the original Concession. Should the Sheikh show no disposition to annul the Concession, and should the attempt to obtain the cancellation of the agreement with Herr Wönckhaus through Esa-bin-Abdul Latif prove abortive, the position will need to be further considered, and the Government of India will be glad to receive your advice as to the action to be taken in that event. But it is hoped that means may be found through one or other of the channels suggested to render the agreement with Herr Wönckhaus inoperative.

4. In the meantime it is particularly desirable that no buildings or wharves should be constructed at Abu Musa without the consent of the Government of India.

Inclosure 17 in No. 42*.

Major Cox to Government of India.

(Confidential.) *Bushire, February* 28, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to reply to Foreign Department letter, dated the 11th February, 1907, on the subject of the Abu Musa Red Oxide Concession. The communication reached Bushire after my departure on tour, but the promptness of my assistants in telegraphing the purport of it to me viâ Henjam enabled me to deal with it when visiting the Trucial Coast on other business.

2. I submit copies of the correspondence, from which it will be seen that, on ascertaining the terms of the contract, neither the partner Esa-bin-Abdul Latif nor Sheikh Sagar-bin-Khalid of Shargah are willing that the Agreement with Herr Wönckhaus should stand; and that the Sheikh has furthermore, in view of Hassan Ali Samaiyeh's unauthorized action, decided for reasons of prudence to withdraw the

Concession from the three concessionnaires, and desires to make fresh provision for the working of the red oxide mines under the advice of the Government of India. I beg to be favoured with the views or wishes of Government on this subject at an early date.

3. It is probable that Messrs. F. C. Strick and Co. would be glad to obtain facilities for exporting the red oxide of Abú Musa, and their acquisition of a footing there would no doubt strengthen their hands in dealing with the Moin-et-Tujjar in connection with the Hormuz mines. They would presumably wish, under ordinary circumstances, to negotiate through their agents at Bushire, Messrs. Malcolm and Co., but the form and conditions to be adopted in any Agreement entered into by them or any other British firm, and the lines on which we are to proceed, are questions of manifest importance in the present case, having regard to the possible contingency of the German Foreign Office interesting themselves in Herr Wönckhaus' venture; and for this reason, and in view of the committal of his interests to us on the part of Sheikh Sagar, it is clearly advisable that we should take steps to make sure that any arrangement now brought about will effectively safeguard for the future the interests both of the Sheikh of Shargah and of British trade. How this end can best be achieved is a question for the consideration of Government.

4. The letter (Inclosure 19) from the Sheikh of Shargah to Hassan-bin-Ali Samaiyeh was given by the former to Esa-bin-Abdul Latif for delivery to him, and has been sent by Esa with a private note to his friend, the Residency Agent at Lingah, asking him to deliver it to Hassan Ali and take his receipt for it.

I shall receive, in due course, a separate report of the fact of its reaching its destination, and have the honour to request the advice of the Government of India as to whether, in view of Sheikh Sagar's intimation to me in his letter of the 9th Moharrum (the 21st February), I should then take any official steps through the Residency Agent at Lingah, to let Haji Hassan know that the Sheikh has apprised me of his decision, or to assure myself that he takes action on it.

For the present, until I receive further instructions, I shall let matters rest where they are.

5. It will be noted that the Sheikh of Shargah, in his letter to Hassan Samaiyeh, informs him of the annulment of the contract from date of receipt of his communication; but it may of course be taken for granted that, practically speaking, there will be nothing to prevent Haji Hassan from disposing of what red oxide he may have on hand, or from letting M. Wönckhaus ship it, until Government have had an opportunity of intimating their views on this point or until a new concessionnaire appears on the scene. There need be no question, therefore, of immediate hardship or of the parties being unable to avail themselves of red oxide already mined or paid for.

Inclosure 18 in No. 42*.

Esa-bin-Abdul Latif to Sheikh Sagar-bin-Khalid.

(After compliments.) 8 *Moharrum*, 1325 (*February* 20, 1907).

I HAVE to communicate with your honour with reference to the lease which I and two partners acquired from the Government of Shargah, relating to the extraction of red oxide from your Island of Abu Musa. As your honour is aware, the document of lease was drawn up in the names of three persons, namely, your humble servant Esa-bin-Abdul Latif, Haji Hassan-bin-Ali Samaiyeh, and Abdulla-bin-Hassan Samaiyeh.

I have come to know that on the 1st June, 1906 (the 8th Rabi-ul-Thani, 1324), the said Haji Hassan entered into a contract with a European merchant named Wönckhaus, without consulting me, and that, according to the terms of the document, he bound himself and his partners in giving an absolute monopoly for the extraction of the red oxide for a period of four years. And the said Haji Hassan executed this Agreement and bound himself without consulting me, previous to the drawing of the deed of contract. The details of the said deed have only now reached me, and I do not agree to the terms of this contract. Accordingly, I forward to your honour a copy of the deed of contract for you to examine; kindly look into it. I beg from your honour assistance in taking the necessary steps for the cancellation and annulment of this contract, for I am altogether unwilling to agree to this lease. Previous to this I have written to Haji Hassan Samaiyeh expressing my disagreement to this contract, but he has sent me no answer.

Finally, I am obliged to call your attention to the deed of contract in the beginning of which is as follows: "Contract between Haji Hassan-bin-Ali Samaiyeh of Lingah, owner and holder of the Abu Musa Concession, and M. Robert Wönckhaus of Lingah." Now Haji Hassan Samaiyeh has no deed of authority from me giving him any general power in regard to action which he might take respecting the lease, &c.; how then has Haji Hassan the right thus to mention himself only without consulting or referring to his partners, of whom I am one? I am, in consequence, obliged to make a complaint on the subject to your honour, and it is for your honour to issue orders.

Inclosure 19 in No. 42°.

Sheikh Sagar-bin-Khalid to Haji Hassan-bin-Ali Samaiyeh.

(Translation.)
(After compliments.) 9 *Moharrum*, 1325 (*February* 21, 1907).

I HAVE to inform you that Esa-bin-Abdul Latif has preferred a complaint to me in connection with the red oxide mines on Abu Musa, which for some years have been leased in the names of yourself and Esa-bin-Abdul Latif and your son Abdulla, according to the deed executed on the 18th Zilkaideh, 1315 (the 21st April, 1899). He has sent me a copy of the deed of contract in operation between you and M. Wönckhaus, and complains that you executed this contract without consulting him, and that he does not agree to the conditions written in the contract now that he has come to know them. I too do not agree to this contract at all, and, as for you, you had no right to give a contract in this fashion, and bind yourself to give away possession of the whole of the output of red oxide mines to others, for a long period and without consulting us or making the slightest reference to us. And, according to our view, harm will accrue to us from the continuance of this Concession in your hands in connection with Abu Musa; and your conduct in the present case is a violation of your duty towards us.

Accordingly, it appears to us advisable to withdraw the document of Concession from you, and we now inform you accordingly by this letter, so that you may realize that the contract between us has terminated. You have no longer any right of enjoyment* in regard to the mines of Abu Musa.

(Seal of Sheikh Sagar-bin-Khalid.)

Inclosure 20 in No. 42°.

Sheikh Sagar-bin-Khalid to Major Cox.

(Translation.)
(After compliments.) 9 *Moharrum*, 1325 (*February* 21, 1907).

I AM obliged to address your honour in the following connection. On the 18th of the month of Zilkaideh, 1315 (the 10th April, 1898), a contract was concluded between us and three persons, namely, Hassan-bin-Ali Samaiyeh and Abdullah-bin-Hassan and Esa-bin-Abdul Latif, for the lease of the red oxide mines in our Island of Abu Musa, and the basis of the contract was a yearly one; they were to pay us a sum of 250 dollars annually.

Up to now we have not experienced anything prejudicial from them, and have been taking from them every year the amount of the rent; and the parties mentioned have themselves been dealing with the work.

But as it appears a short time ago something took place which we consider to be harmful to us; and inclosed in this letter we send your honour a copy of the letter which has reached us from Esa-bin-Abdul Latif, who is one of the partners, the purport of which is that he complains of the action taken by Haji Hassan Samaiyeh, and sends us a translation of a deed of contract wrongfully passed by Haji Hassan Samaiyeh to the merchant named Wönckhaus. We are apprehensive of the results of such a contract, and do not agree to it, and for this reason we have decided upon the withdrawal of our document (of Concession) from the said lessees and its annulment.

And whereas Haji Hassan Samaiyeh is a subject of the British Government, we forward to your honour a copy of the letter which we have written to the said Haji Hassan for your information.

* The word used is "Tasarruf" = use, possession, enjoyment, occupancy, or control.—P. Z. Cox.

In conclusion, we beg you to consult the Imperial Government, and request their views as to the best means of assuring to us in future the full benefits from the red oxide mines within our territory. (We will act) according to your view

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Inclosure 21 in No. 42°.

Major Cox to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) *Bushire, March* 21, 1907.

PLEASE refer to my despatch dated 28th ultimo.

Lingah concessionnaire, writing as British subject, has sent me copy of the Sheikh of Shargah's letter, and asks my intervention in his behalf.

Residency agent reports that in doing this Hassan has acted on the advice of Mr. Brown, agent of German firm at Lingah. I propose to reply, subject to the views of Government, that I have also received representations from the Sheikh of Shargah, and am referring the matter to Government.

It is stated on good authority that a German steamer which is expected from Bussorah in a few days intends visiting Abu Musa and taking in cargo.

Inclosure 22 in No. 42°.

Government of India to Major Cox.

(Telegraphic.) *Simla, April* 8, 1907.

ABU MUSA.

Please see your telegram dated 21st March.

Your proceedings are approved by Government of India. Hassan Samaiyeh may be informed as proposed, and you may add that the case does not appear to be one in which you are called on to intervene. Question of arranging new contract with Messrs. Strick or others does not press, and it will be desirable in any case that the new contract should not come into force until the end of this year. This will allow of Wönckhaus fulfilling any subsidiary contracts that he may have made for supply of red oxide. It might perhaps be better for the Sheikh not to grant a monopoly of purchase to any one, the owners merely extracting the ore and selling to shippers. You should be careful to assume no responsibility for action already taken by the Sheikh, but he should be advised to show you draft of any new contract which he may propose to grant.

Inclosure 23 in No. 42°.

Mr. Bill to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) *Bushire, May* 21, 1907.

I HAVE to report—

1. Sheikh of Shargah has sent men to Abu Musa Island to stop further mining operations by concessionnaires' men.

Though this action is a natural corollary of resumption of Concession, it may precipitate developments.

2. Messrs. Strick have, resuming their former intentions, instructed their Bushire agent to forward sample of this oxide, and in later telegram have inquired whether he can arrange for purchase of trial shipment of 400 tons, if necessary.

I think that, pending further hint from His Majesty's Government, it might be well if Messrs. Strick, London, were asked to postpone negotiations.

I request that, if possible, telegraphic instructions may be sent to me by night of 25th, if Government of India desire me to take any special line in regard to 2 or not, above reported.

Inclosure 24 in No. 42*.

Government of India to Major Cox.

(Telegraphic.) *Simla, May 24, 1907.*

PLEASE see your telegram dated 21st instant regarding Abu Musa.

Messrs. Strick's Bushire agent may be asked to inform his principals that it would be convenient if they deferred any action with regard to the Abu Musa oxide mines for the present. India Office will doubtless communicate with Messrs. Strick, as we are addressing them on the subject.

[25035] No. 43.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received July 27.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of telegrams relative to affairs in the Yemen and the Aden hinterland.

India Office, July 27, 1907.

Inclosure 1 in No. 43.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P. *July 23, 1907.*

YEMEN: My telegram of the 20th instant.

Resident at Aden telegraphs to following effect under date the 16th July:—

"News of capture of Rada by I. m's forces is confirmed by Political Officer, Dthala. He reports also capture of Mullah. Fighting is general near Nadara, twelve hours from Kataba, and Yarim Damar is besieged. Local feeling among Jews and Arabs, as reported by Political Officer, is that this year, and at no distant date, there will be general Armageddon. He advocates sending some sort of sympathetic message to Imam, even now, conveyance of which he says could be arranged, and deprecates once more lack of response to past advances received from Imam."

Inclosure 2 in No. 43.

Mr. Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, July 25, 1907.*

ADEN: Your telegrams of the 20th and 23rd instant.

Withdrawal of Political Officer from Dthala. Please report steps that have been taken to give effect to instructions on this matter conveyed in my telegrams of the 14th and 18th June. If the success of Imam is as great as is reported, complications, which will require to be dealt with as they arise, may undoubtedly follow, but His Majesty's Government do not find in this consideration any reason for delay in the withdrawal of Political Officer. On the contrary, in view of the situation at Constantinople, there appear to be distinct advantages in avoiding entering into dealings with the Imam as long as possible, and in treating, as far as possible, question as one between Turkish Government and him. His Majesty's Government cannot therefore entertain any idea of keeping Political Officer at Dthala as a medium of negotiations with Imam. I shall be glad, however, to be furnished with your views as to the advice which should be given to Dthala Amir in these circumstances, as to his own dealings with Imam, if he should apply for it spontaneously, without any suggestion from us. Is there reason for doing more, at present, than to warn him against taking part in trans-frontier affairs himself, or allowing his subjects to do so? The risk which we should incur most seriously impresses me if, in anticipation of complications with Imam, we allow ourselves to give pledges which hereafter may cause us to be involved in military operations—as disastrous as those that recently took place in Somaliland—on the borders of our Protectorate, and at an impossible distance from the frontier of Aden, where real British interest lies. As you will have understood from my despatches, the broad object which His Majesty's Government have in view is to observe our international obligations towards Turkey, and in other respects to avoid responsibility for affairs of hinterland tribes.

[24861] No. 44.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 80.) *Foreign Office, July 27, 1907.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

PLEASE inquire as to truth of a report which has reached Messrs. Lynch from their Bagdad Agent that relations are suspended between Persian and Turkish Governments, and that warning has been issued to Ottoman subjects that they cross the frontier at their own risk.

[25102] No. 45.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 29.)

(No. 481.) *Therapia, July 20, 1907.*

Sir,

IN continuance of my despatch No. 417 of the 13th instant, I have the honour to report that Captain Dickson and the Russian Vice-Consul at Bitlis duly presented to Tahir Pasha their list of suggestions for reform, as modified in accordance with my instructions and those of my Russian colleague, and his Excellency, while asking for time, promised that they should be carried out.

The details of the suggestions were communicated to the Grand Vizier by the Russian Ambassador, and in consequence of my representations and those of his Excellency, the Grand Vizier has telegraphed to Tahir Pasha instructing him to pay special attention to the complaints of the British and Russian Consuls, and specially to the prevention of Moslem immigrants from settling in Christian villages and ousting Christian villagers, and the necessity of collecting only the legal taxes, giving proper printed receipts, and refraining from the seizure of articles of prime necessity.

His Highness told Mr. Fitzmaurice that Tahir Pasha and the Acting Vali had received strict orders to take every measure of a tranquillizing nature, while there was a decision of the Council of Ministers to amnesty some of the Armenian agitators who had surrendered in the neighbourhood of Moush.

Captain Dickson has been prevented from going himself to Moush by an attack of fever, and as he was in any case anxious to return to Van to deal with business entailed by the departure of his dragoman, I have instructed Mr. Vice-Consul Heard to proceed to Bitlis from Kharpout, where he had arrived to spend the summer, and to travel viâ Moush.

I trust that this arrangement will meet with your approval.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[25105] No. 46.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 29.)

(No. 434.) *Therapia, July 22, 1907.*

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Hodeida reporting on the disorders and excesses brought about by the presence in the town of a large number of time-expired soldiers. Business appears to have been brought to a standstill, and the authorities looked on helplessly and indifferently.

In a subsequent telegram which I received on the 16th instant, Mr. Richardson reported that the disorders were continuing, and that foreigners had been molested, and the property of British subjects attacked. Representations to the Vali were useless, and all the more so as his Excellency actually encouraged these excesses in order to force the hand of the central authorities. Mr. Richardson added that the whole vilayet was greatly disturbed, and that some places in the East had been captured by the rebels, whose activity was also increasing in the neighbourhood of Sana. This movement too was, he thought, fostered by the Vali.

I accordingly instructed Mr. Fitzmaurice to represent strongly to the Grand Vizier the danger of allowing this state of things to continue, and his Highness was induced to give orders for a transport to be sent at once to take away the time-expired soldiers from Hodeida.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 46.

Vice-Consul Richardson to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 40.) *Hodeida, June 25, 1907.*

Sir,

THE transport "Marmora," whose arrival here on the 5th instant, has already been reported to your Excellency, sailed at noon to-day for Rizeh, carrying away 1,600 time-expired soldiers, comprising Turks, Syrians and Albanians.

The above troops joined the colours in the Turkish years 1316 and 1317 (1900 and 1901); the greater part of the service being spent in this province, where they have been employed in the operations against the Imam since 1904.

The past week at Hodeida has been marked by the disorderly conduct of these time-expired troops, about 2,500 of whom had been collected here. Excesses were committed by the men in various quarters of the town, and encounters with the local population have been of daily occurrence, in which the soldiers were generally worsted. The Arabs accounted for several casualities amongst the troops.

The water supply of Hodeida has been interrupted owing to attacks from the soldiery on camelmen and drivers of carts conveying drinking-water from the wells outside the town.

Tradesmen have been obliged to close their shops and stores for the greater part of the day during the past week for the same reason, and local trade has been at a standstill.

The authorities, in the meantime, have been looking on with stolid indifference during these disturbances, being unable to protect life and property against the ravages of these so-called soldiers.

The local garrison, that consists of some 200 or 300 men, is inadequate to enforce order on these occasions, and the disturbances would have assumed a far more serious aspect had it not been that ten months' salary was paid to the soldiers since their arrival, which pacified them to a certain extent.

There are still a few hundred time-expired troops remaining, who are in a pitiful state—practically in rags, without proper food or water. It is no wonder that they are driven to loot the bazaars in order to subsist, and that under the very eyes of the authorities, who should have no cause for surprise at their conduct.

It is expected that about 1,000 more regulars that joined the service in 1902 will shortly arrive from the interior to be sent home, when a repetition of these disorderly scenes, that tend to become more frequent every year, may again be witnessed.

The mutinous officers at Sana'a, referred to in previous reports, have not returned to duty and are still in possession of the telegraph office. They insist on direct negotiation with the Palace in the matter of their grievances.

It is rumoured here that a Commission of high military officials left Constantinople last week bound for the Yemen to inquire into the causes of discontent prevailing amongst the troops stationed in this province, and especially into the case of the mutinous officers above referred to.

Telegraphic communication between Hodeida and the outside world has been in a more or less interrupted state during the past three months, owing to the frequent cutting, by Zereneek tribesmen and others, of the land telegraph line to Shaik Saïd that passes through their district.

It has therefore been impossible for me to communicate by telegraph to-day to your Excellency, and to Sir Eldon Gorst at Cairo, the departure of the transport "Marmora" canalwards.

With the greatest respect, I have, &c.

(Signed) G. A. RICHARDSON.

[25106] No. 47.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 29.)

(No. 435.)
Sir, *Constantinople, July 22, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch which I have received from Bitlis, through His Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, concerning the recall of Ferid Pasha and the resumption of business in Bitlis.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 47.

Mr. Safrastian to Consul Shipley.

Bitlis, July 2, 1907.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 25th and my telegrams of the 26th and 28th June last, I have the honour to report that a telegram arrived on the 25th ultimo from Zeki Pasha, the Commander of the 4th Army Corps at Erzengan, announcing to the people of Bitlis the Imperial Iradé to the effect that Ferid Pasha, the Vali of Bitlis, has been recalled to Erzengan pending his trial, the Defterdar of Bitlis appointed Acting Vali, and that a Commission of Inquiry (Tahir Pasha, of Trebizond, and Ferik Mahmoud Pasha, of Van) is being dispatched to Bitlis to investigate the reasons of the rising of the people and their complaints against the Vali.

On the arrival of the tidings the Council of Sheikhs ordered the mob to disperse, to reopen the shops, and begin to work. The civil authorities, which were nil for the four preceding days, reappeared in their offices, and soon the conditions took their normal course in the town as before. Ferik Mahmoud Pasha arrived from Van on the 28th ultimo with one battalion of infantry; another battalion has arrived since from Mush, and five others are reported to be already *en route* from Erzeroum, Harpoot, and Mosul.

The Sheikhs seem to be quite nervous about the events of the nearest future; they are encouraged by the recall of Ferid Pasha, and have received letters of congratulations and sympathy from the people of Sairt, the Chiefs of Modky, the Sheikh of Khizan, &c., who at the same time assure the Mussulmans of Bitlis of their moral and material assistance in case of need to the people of Bitlis, and that thousands of armed Kurds are ready to come to their help from every part of the vilayet if the Sheikhs wanted them.

Pending the arrival of Tahir Pasha from Trebizond, President of the Commission of Inquiry, Mahmoud Pasha and the Sheikhs are doing almost nothing; the latter will probably watch first the proceedings of the Commission and then decide upon the policy which they are to pursue.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARSHAG S. SAFRASTIAN.

[25115] No. 48.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 29.)

(No. 444.)
Sir, *Therapia, July 24, 1907.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 393 of the 27th ultimo, respecting the affairs of the Yemen, I have the honour to report that the Arab Sheikhs who had come to Constantinople in response to the Sultan's invitation were received in audience by His Majesty before their departure, and addressed by His Majesty in a speech, of which the gist was that the conduct of the rebels was contrary to the will of God and the Prophet, and that bloodshed amongst Mussulmans must be stopped. He had caused a scheme of reform to be drawn up which would insure prosperity and good government, and had approved the scheme and given orders for it to be put into execution.

The delivery of an address of this kind by the Sultan, who was speaking mainly in his capacity as Caliph, is a most unusual event, as is also the publication of an account of such proceedings.

I have the honour to annex an extract from the "Levant Herald," giving an account of what passed on this occasion.* According to the Sublime Porte, a certain measure of administrative independence has been accorded to the Yemen. The subordinate provincial officials from the rank of Kaïmakam and Mudir (that is, the heads of Cantons and their subdivisions, see G. Young, Volume I, pp. 57 and 58), will be Arabs appointed by the Imam and Sheikhs, while the Governor-General and Governors (Mutessarifs) will be nominated by the Central Government.

I doubt these concessions satisfying the Imam, however satisfactory they may have been to the Sheikhs who came here, among whom there were, I believe, absolutely no representatives of the rebel party, but I imagine that the scope and extent of the concessions is still under discussion, and that the question can only be definitely settled after the deputation has returned to the Yemen and conferred with the Imam. It is quite evident, however, that the present state of affairs cannot continue without the Sultan risking the loss of the Yemen, and that Turkey cannot support the drain of men and money which the insurrection in that province has entailed for several years past. It would probably be below the mark to estimate the annual loss of life at 10,000 men a-year and the expenditure at close on 500,000*l.*, while at the same time the disturbances in the Yemen encourage discontent among the whole Arab population of the neighbouring regions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[25117] No. 49.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 29.)

(No. 446.)
Sir, *Therapia, July 23, 1907.*

I HAVE received a telegram from Mr. Heard, His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, reporting that the Vali there is opposed by all the local officials, who are endeavouring to bring about his removal, by means of intrigues at the Palace, in consequence of his attempt to suppress bribery in his vilayet. The result is that much confusion prevails in the administration, and the Vali's position is critical.

Mr. Heard states that the Vali is most anxious for the support of this Embassy, and has promised to drop proceedings against the Armenians entirely.

Mr. Heard considers that in these circumstances the dismissal of the Vali would be unfortunate, particularly as his isolated position made him more likely to listen to the representations of the Consuls, and Mr. Heard states that this opinion is shared by his American colleague.

I have therefore made representations on the subject to the Grand Vizier, who has assured me that he is giving the Vali his entire support.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[25120] No. 50.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 29.)

(No. 449.)
Sir, *Constantinople, July 24, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, inclosing a despatch from the Dragoman in charge of the Vice-Consulate at Bitlis relative to the state of affairs in that district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

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* Not printed.

Inclosure 1 in No. 50.

Acting Consul Young to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 43.)

Sir, *Erzeroum, July* 13, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Excellency herewith two copies of a despatch which has just reached me from the British Dragoman at Bitlis with regard to the state of affairs in that district.

Mr. Safrastian also forwards under the same cover and without comment a document in Armenian addressed to this Consulate and purporting to describe a recent incident at Souloukh, in the neighbourhood of Moush. The original bears neither date nor signature, and therefore cannot be regarded as authoritative. As a graphic description of the deplorable conditions prevailing in that part of this Consular district, it would seem, however, to possess interest, and on these grounds alone I venture to transmit to your Excellency a copy of Mr. Safrastian's translation.

Rumours are prevalent here of serious trouble between the local authorities and the populace at Van, but I await authoritative confirmation before referring to them in detail.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. E. WILKIE YOUNG.

Inclosure 2 in No. 50.

Mr. Safrastian to Consul Shipley.

Sir, *Bitlis, July* 9, 1907.

WITH reference to your despatch of the 28th June last respecting murders and excesses committed upon Armenians in Moush district in consequence of the recent combat near Souloukh between the Turkish troops and the revolutionaries, I have the honour to report that the account of it, as reported to you by the Armenians of the Moush Plain, is confirmed almost in all details, with the addition of some new events in the town of Moush.

As mentioned in my despatches of the 18th and the 25th June last, some thirty murders have been committed in Souloukh during or after the fighting on the 9th ultimo; but, as the villagers are dispersed still and not returned to the village, it is therefore somewhat risky to give details of excesses. The noteworthy fact is that the excesses stated in my above-mentioned despatches are fully confirmed in spite of the official denials. A few days after the fighting five Armenians were killed in Tzoronk by the men of the famous Haji Faris, of Sohemlag; two Armenians were killed in Akhjan, and some others have been killed in various villages.

On the 20th June last, when Armenians had hardly reopened their shops, some soldiers (relieved from the service but not paid) and "Janbezars" had attacked the Armenians in the bazaar, and wounded some fifteen men. A certain Armenian, of the village of Akhjan, was imprisoned in Moush and hung by the feet. Some days later the man died painfully. The Armenian Bishop of Moush refused to bury him, telling them that a man could be hung by Imperial order only, and advised at the same time the Armenians to close the bazaar, there being no security whatever of life. He (the Bishop) sent also telegrams to the Porte and to the Armenian Gregorian Patriarch at Constantinople informing them of the state of affairs in the town and district alike.

Things seem quieter since in the plain, and the bazaar reopened in Moush.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ARSHAG S. SAFRASTIAN.

Inclosure 3 in No. 50.

Letter addressed by Armenians of the Moush Plain to Consul Shipley.

(Translation.)

Sir, [*Undated.*]

ON the Sunday, the 27th May last (o.s.), some fifteen Armenian revolutionaries had gone to the village of Souloukh, two and a-half hours north of Moush, on the right bank of Euphrates. A Turkish spy, a certain Mehmed Scherif, had gone to the same

village on the same day, and, being informed that there were revolutionaries in the village, returned to Moush at once and advised the Government of the fact. The Government dispatched, under the leadership of the military Major Emin Aga, two companies of cavalry and one battalion of infantry, with the necessary preparations to attack the revolutionaries.

The surprised revolutionaries resorted to self-defence; they sent three of their companions to seize the line of the Euphrates bridge, in order to give opportunity to women, girls, and children to escape across the bridge, and to prevent the Turkish troops of Guravi to join the other troops. The remaining twelve companions held positions against Emin Aga coming from Moush. The fighting was begun. The frightened people ran away across the bridge, but hardly one part was saved. New troops, arriving in aid from Guravi, fought with the three revolutionaries seizing the bridge, two of whom were killed, while the troops lost on their part a Lieutenant and five soldiers. The bridge was then occupied by the troops, and the people surrounded on all parts in the village. The fighting lasted till evening. Two revolutionaries were wounded out of the twelve, and on the part of the Turks were killed Major Emin Aga, twenty-five soldiers, and some wounded. The dark setting in, the revolutionaries escaped. Turkish tooops entered the village, followed by Kurds and Turkish mob, like herds of wolves, and plundered the sheep, the cattle, furniture, food, &c., of the village, and carried them off, practised unusual violations on innocent women and girls with Mussulman barbarism. As to how many defenceless and unarmed people were killed is unknown still. Being the richest village in the Plain of Moush, with 100 houses, Souloukh at present is entirely ruined.

In consequence of this event, the Plain of Moush and the neighbouring Armenian districts, where there are more than 200,000 Armenians, are in danger. Agricultural works and business in the fields are completely stopped. Circulation from one village to another has ceased, and in every part one smells blood.

On the 29th May, five Armenians were killed in Tzoronk by Kurds, two Armenians were killed in the village of Akhjan, and six others were killed on the 30th in various villages. So murders grow on the roads every day, and there is nobody to care for these murders. The corpses of the murdered were taken to Moush, to the Mutessarif Savfet Bey, and a local police agent reported it to the Government. The Mutessarif, getting angry, tore to pieces the report and turned out the poor villagers with insults.

In previous times, when such an event happened, the Government used to start out patrols to keep the public order and tranquillity. No patrols are watching now, neither in villages nor in Moush. All shops are shut in the town, and everybody has taken refuge in his house. A danger threatens from moment to moment. This is an obvious sign that the Government try to get an order from the Sultan for the massacring of the people. That is the reason why patrols are not watching here and there. In addition to this, the Alai Bey of Moush is compelling villagers with terrible tortures to sign documents to the effect that the country is quiet, the people is happy and pleased with the Government; whilst, owing to the oppressions of "multezims" (tithe-buyers), the abuses committed by zaptiehs, and various privations—in short, owing to tortures and murders in last years—the people are despaired, and have applied to the Russian Consul at Bitlis this spring and are registered as Russian subjects.

Now, Excellency, we beg you in the name of Christian confraternity and philanthropy to make us the favour to telegraph where it is necessary the present moribund state of affairs of the Plain of Moush and to meet an imminent catastrophe, which threatens to exterminate the life and the existence of thousands of innocent people.

This short report not reached yet in your hands, who knows what catastrophes may arrive still on this unfortunate and forsaken country?

Pitiful Sir, we raise to you the screams and sighs of our strangled voices, as the roads are closed and there are no means of letting hear the British and Russian Consuls at Bitlis. We wish this request might reach your hands, and soon a hope of freedom might rise for this miserable people arrived on the brink of loss.

All people of the Plain of Moush.

[25121] No. 51.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received July 29.)

(No. 450.)

Sir, *Constantinople, July 24, 1907.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 423 of the 17th instant, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis reporting on the recent rising at Bitlis and the dismissal of the Vali.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 51.

Vice-Consul Dickson to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 1.)

Sir, *Bitlis, July 6, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to report that in the course of my journey sanctioned by your Excellency, I arrived in Bitlis the night of the 30th June, and found your telegrams of the 14th, 24th, and 26th June. I conferred with the Dragoman of this Vice-Consulate and with my Russian colleague here, and with their assistance now understand the situation. I telegraphed to your Excellency on the 2nd July the main facts of the situation.

With regard to the revolt against and dismissal of Ferid Pasha, the late Vali, it would appear that his rule or misrule has been unpopular to Christians and Moslems alike, his one aim appears to have been to amass money, and his means were unscrupulous, and in most cases hard on the people.

The revolutionary movement among the Armenians of Kush, &c., which he fostered by his injustice and cruelty, furnished him with a means of protecting himself at Constantinople, as also an excuse for the Kurds to pillage and maltreat the Armenians. These same Kurds, it is credibly stated, being protected from justice by paying certain Kurd Agas in Bitlis—for example, Yassin Gabol Aga, Yussuf Pasha, and the Sheikh of Khizan, who in turn paid the Vali to allow the course of the law to run past without finding them. The latter Sheikh of Khizan, Seid Ali, who can put some 3,000 armed men in Bitlis in a few hours, it is stated paid 800*l.* to the Vali to shield the misdeeds of his Kurds, and at the time of the *émeute* he sent to Bitlis to demand the return of his money from the Vali.

Ghatto Bishar Aga, a well-known brigand of Kharzan, of whose exploits you will be aware, and whom troops and artillery were sent to capture, paid 700*l.* to the Vali, and although he was surrounded, he was allowed to escape, and no serious steps have since been taken to capture him. He is at large, and it is reported that through the offices of the late Vali he was hoping for a pardon. A certain Hehmed Effendi, who had been tax collecting in this vilayet, had collected considerably more than the legal amount, and the Vali received 700*l.* from him as his share of the surplus. After the suspension of the Vali, while he was under military supervision here, he took some steps to try and clear himself of this corruption, which I am informed were unsuccessful.

During the earthquakes the Vali received some 1,300*l.* from Constantinople for relief work and reconstruction. With this he constructed some few wooden sheds value at 40*l.*, distributed about 300*l.* of bread, and what happened to the rest of the money is not known. But it is said that he sent a document signed by certain notables of the town, his friends, showing that all the money had been distributed.

The late Vali had received his pay to end of August 1907, while the gendarmes, &c., have received theirs only to November 1906, and the smaller Government employés only to March 1907.

I might quote many more such instances, but think the above will serve to show your Excellency the sort of dealing the late Vali had with the Kurd brigands and corrupt officials.

All this served to make his rule extremely unpopular with the Armenians, but as he did not touch the interests of the Moslems in any way they did not trouble very much, except that the extreme immorality of his private character and the unscrupulous means he sometimes used to gain his immoral ends, somewhat shocked

some of the better thinking Moslems. Then came the earthquakes of the past winter, which served to considerably impoverish the inhabitants, to retard trade, and every one was thrown on their beam ends for a means of existence.

All this time the price of corn, and, in fact, all commodities, was extremely high, on an average more than double the normal price for the season of the year, and this with the increased poverty induced by the earthquakes made life still harder. Now it appears that there was no natural cause why the price of corn, the main food of the people, and the commodities which principally concerns this question should have been so high as 15 piastres the code (local measure), the normal price during the winter being from 5 to 10 piastres.

From statistics I have gathered here there is now in Bitlis town alone a surplus of previous years' corn of 24,700 codes, while in Boulanik, Melasgard, Akhlat, Mush, Kharzan, Sairt, and Bohtan there is a surplus of 256,900 codes. All of this surplus might have been brought to Bitlis to lower the price, and from what I can gather enough would have been brought to make the price normal if the late Vali had not prevented it.

It would appear that the corn supply of Bitlis is in the hands of some few unscrupulous merchants, who it is stated, aided by the Vali, forced the price up, prohibiting the import of corn from these other districts by pillaging the caravans and threats, &c. The fact remains that with these enormous surpluses and the owners in many cases desirous of sending them to Bitlis, the price of corn had risen to 24 piastres the code, when, at the time of the revolt, a caravan with corn going to Diarbekir was forcibly stopped by the Council of Sheikhs, and the corn brought and sold in Bitlis, when the price immediately fell to 18 piastres the code. It is hard to prove that the Vali was in this ring, but he is given the credit of it, and this is one of the main causes of the Moslem agitation against him, as, if he was not in the ring, he could easily have taken steps to break the ring and lower the price.

The other chief cause of the Moslem revolt was the changing of silver money question. It would appear that in the winter the Vali received some order from Constantinople that all worn silver 5-piastre pieces (commonly known as cherceks) in circulation were to be exchanged for good coins before the 1st March. After that date they were to be exchanged, but only for their weight in silver, *i.e.*, 3½ piastres. The Vali issued orders that all these coins were to be exchanged at the Treasury, but said nothing about the latter part of the order; he also placed everything in the way of the exchanging of these coins, saying that new coins had not arrived and other excuses. Then when the 1st March arrived the latter part of the order was promulgated, *i.e.*, that all these coins must be exchanged, but that only 3½ piastres would be given for the 5-piastre piece. Then when people brought money to be exchanged the officials sometimes cut the money in half and returned it saying that they had no new coins, and that they had defaced the money offered as it was bad, and that the people could make bracelets, &c., with it. Thus the exceedingly small amount of money in circulation in Bitlis was still further diminished and trade paralyzed, the bakers and shops refused to take old, and there being only a very little new money.

The Vali was credited with bringing about this state of affairs purposely, and for his own personal advantage, which one can believe extremely likely, as a man in the Vali's position would be able to make a lot of money out of such a situation. Anyhow he became extremely unpopular with the Moslems for this affair. The question of the general desire to emigrate among the Armenians has also been added by the Moslems as one of the complaints against the Vali, though I think that it is an afterthought. Anyhow, as the question is an important one, I will give the main facts shortly.

Some time the end of 1906 the Sultan issued an order allowing Armenians to emigrate to Russia on the same terms as they were allowed to go to America, *i.e.*, after paying all their debts, arrears of taxes, settling any lawsuits against them, selling any property they owned in Turkey, renouncing their Turkish nationality, &c. This order was probably given with the idea that some few families only would take advantage of it, and was thus promulgated in the villages. Great was the Vali's consternation, therefore, when villages *en bloc* from the districts of Boulanik, Akhlat, Mush Plain, &c., applied for permission to emigrate. He asked them their reasons for wishing to leave, and in many cases was frankly informed that it was the oppression and lack of security and protection which made it impossible for them to live in the country. He then took steps to prevent this movement, and many of the villagers having brought their requests to emigrate to the Russian Consul at Bitlis

the Vali was nervous that they might somehow become Russian subjects without his knowledge and thus complicate matters; he therefore gave orders stopping all Armenians from leaving their villages, or from sending petitions to the Russian Consul, and imprisoning any that disobeyed. The Russian Consul states that he received requests to emigrate from some 80,000 Armenians; the Vali, it is said, from 100,000. He then took steps to fabricate evidence that the Armenians did not wish to emigrate; that it was the Russian Consul that was fostering the scheme, and that he was paying each prospective emigrant 1½ piastres a-day. From what I understand Russia does not accept Armenians under these conditions. The Russian Consul here tells me that he informed the Vali of this, and also that in accepting the requests from Armenians to emigrate he informed them that he had no power to sanction them, but would refer the matter to his Embassy. But the Dragoman of this Vice-Consulate informs me, and I am inclined to believe, that there was some sort of inducement held out to the Armenians to go to Russia, if not by the Russian Consul, at any rate by his Dragoman—promises of land, rations, &c. During May last the Vali sent a Commission to the villages in Mush Plain ostensibly to investigate the complaints of the villagers, but in reality to collect eulogistic documents, signed by the villagers, stating their contentment with the Vali, and denying their wish to emigrate. In most cases, however, the villagers were forewarned, and were cunning enough to send their seals to the neighbouring villages wherever the Commission came, so they could not sign these documents. Thus this Commission did not achieve much. However, the Vali prepared a similar document in Bitlis, brought the heads of various Armenian villages to Bitlis and forced them to sign this document, they not knowing what it contained, by various original and unscrupulous methods. Thus that it certified that they did not suffer from syphilis, that their village was in need of relief of corn and oxen, &c., imprisoning them when they refused to sign it. This same system was practised in the Kaza of Akhlat.

These above-mentioned abuses and various others of minor importance combined to bring about the revolt of the Moslems on the 22nd June, described in the Dragoman's despatch of the 25th June, 1907.

Although the general feeling among the Kurds in these districts is unfavourable to the Government, and in districts at all distant from troops and a seat of Government the Kurds do not accept any form of Government. Yet, from what I gather, this revolt was entirely directed against the personality of the Vali and his complete indifference to the suffering of the people, Christian and Ryah Kurd alike, for, although one hears a lot about the oppression of the Armenians and the misdeeds of the Kurds, there is also a large community of Ryah Kurds in this district who also suffer at the hands of the Government and from the richer and more powerful Assiret Kurds. This is exemplified in one of the complaints of the people against the late Vali.

Ferid Pasha had some roads or boulevards constructed through the town of Bitlis. To do this properly it was necessary to pull down many houses and include their sites in the roadway. This he did without any compunction, and without paying the proprietors of these houses any compensation. Most of these houses belonged to poor Kurds.

After the revolt against Ferid Pasha, described in the Dragoman's despatch of the 22nd June, 1907, had taken place, and the Council of Sheikhs, by whom it had been organized, had taken possession of the telegraph office, they demanded from the Porte the removal of the Vali, and stated their reasons for this, describing his many unjust acts, &c. For two days they had no reply. Jelal Pasha, the Commandant, then received word by telegraph from Zekki Pasha, the Nushir at Erzengan, telling him to advise the mob to disperse, and that troops were being dispatched from the neighbouring stations to repress the revolt, &c. Telegrams in cypher also came from the Palace addressed to the Vali; these were torn up. Then word came from the Palace advising the Council of Sheikhs to make their peace with the Vali, and menacing them with the troops that were being sent to Bitlis. To this the Sheikhs responded that they were prepared, and that they had 16,000 armed Kurds at their disposition. On the 25th orders came from the Palace for the removal of the Vali, and the Defterdar was nominated Acting Vali, and a Commission, of whom Tabir Pasha, recently appointed Vali of Trebizond, and Mahmoud Pasha Ferik of Van were members, was appointed to make an inquiry on the affairs leading to this *émeute*.

The mob then dispersed quietly, and affairs in Bitlis at once resumed their normal tone as if nothing had ever occurred. Sheikh Seid Ali of Khizan, whom I

mentioned above, had arrived outside Bitlis with a band of armed followers during the interval to help the Council of Sheikhs, and many other of the powerful Kurd Chiefs in the district had sent in to Bitlis showing sympathy with the Sheikhs and offering assistance if required. Telegrams were also received from the people of Sairt and other places offering sympathy and support. Altogether, during the interval between the 22nd and 26th June, there was every chance of the riot spreading to a general revolt of the Kurds in the district against the Government. Fortunately the Palace gave way, and all these growing clouds immediately evaporated, and now the sky is clear.

As I have already informed your Excellency elsewhere, there are several very powerful Kurd tribes in this vilayet who do not acknowledge the Turkish Government's control over them, and the Turks do not try to make them, such as the Batounn, Shormakli, Biru, Ponjarani, Hiran, &c. These tribes, mostly nomads, are all exceedingly well armed with Martinis and Mausers, and can put literally thousands of men into the field. They all detest the Government, and mostly each other, but they are somewhat more religious than the Turks, whom they rather look down for their lack of fervency, and thus they greatly respect their Sheikhs, and any movement strongly advocated by their Sheikhs would be likely to gain their support if asked for. The fighting worth of a crowd of some 50,000 odd Bashi-Bouzouks, with no order, cohesion, or discipline, and no leader, and full of intertribal feuds, is a doubtful quantity; but anyhow it might make things unpleasant for the Government and the country, and, as the Kurd idea of annoying the Government is to sack the bazaar or pillage a Christian village, the effect would be unpleasant for the Armenians. I might mention that the unsuccessful campaign of the Turks in the Yemen is not doing any good to the prestige of the Government among these Kurds such as I saw. However, for the present, all is tranquil again.

During the interval from the 22nd to 25th June, the Sheikhs kept excellent order in Bitlis and no outrages occurred. Various unpopular officials, friends of the Vali, were imprisoned by them: the Vali himself was kept under military surveillance at the barracks. Then General Mahmoud Pasha arrived from Van with two battalions, and camped some two hours from the town. The various officials were liberated, and things relapsed to their normal condition. The Sheikhs then began to be a little nervous as to what would be the outcome of the inquiry. Ferid Pasha, the late Vali, left for Erzengan, and the next day Jelal Pasha, the Commandant, was also recalled to Erzengan.

On the 7th July Tabir Pasha arrived here, but he has not yet received definite instructions from Constantinople as to his duties here, but, as the mass of troops threatened to be sent here have dwindled down to one battalion of 400 men, it would seem as if his intentions were to be pacific. However, the late plotters, Sheikhs, &c., met together on the 8th July and swore to stand by one another if there were any question of punishment for the revolt.

Reports of frequent fighting between the soldiers and revolutionaries, accompanied by subsequent pillaging and atrocities, continue to come from Mush Plain; but these are difficult to confirm, as no villagers are allowed to come to Bitlis, and so the reports are mostly bazaar rumours, the Acting Vali denies any knowledge of them and supposes affairs quiet there. Tabir Pasha, who passed through Mush, told me he had no idea at the time that things were unsettled there, and that the Mutessarif there watched him so closely that there was no opportunity for any one to inform him, but that he had since had his suspicions aroused that things were not well, and that he was going to make inquiries.

I have, &c.
(Signed) BERTRAM DICKSON, *Captain, R.F.A.*

[25965] No. 52.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received August 3.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 1st instant, relative to affairs of the Aden Protectorate.

India Office, August 3, 1907.

Inclosure in No. 52.

Mr. Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, August* 1, 1907.

ADEN. Your telegram dated the 30th ultimo.

Any further delay is matter for regret, since in present state of Arab rising across the border it may give occasion for unforeseen complications. The 28th February was contemplated as practicable date of withdrawal in Resident's letters of the 27th January, in which the whole position was surveyed by him, and in my despatch of the 14th June arrangements proposed to give effect to withdrawal were approved, on the understanding that fresh disputes would not be caused by them, that redistribution of posts was acceptable to tribes, and that posts to be maintained were necessary. I should be glad to know whether there is any reason why arrangements originally contemplated in Resident's letters of the 27th January, so far as they were sanctioned by my despatch, should not be carried out at once, with consequent withdrawal, if, as now seems probable, difficulty is caused by the embodiment of the proposed arrangements in formal Agreements. If the Agreements of which I have not seen the terms are not immediately accepted by tribes without protest from any other tribes who may consider themselves concerned, they should be reported for orders.

[26202] No. 53.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 6.)

(No. 467.)

Sir, *Therapia, July* 31, 1907.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 450 of the 24th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from Captain Dickson reporting the result of the representations made by him and his Russian colleague to Tahir Pasha with a view to effecting an improvement in the situation of the Christians in the Bitlis Vilayet.

I am informed by the Grand Vizier that Tahir Pasha has now been appointed Vali of Bitlis, and Ferid Pasha, the late Vali, transferred as Acting Vali to Trebizond.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 53.

Captain Dickson to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 2.)

Sir, *Bitlis, July* 14, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency, *en suite* of my telegrams of the 8th, 12th, and 14th July, that on the 10th July I had a friendly conversation with Tahir Pasha, when he agreed with me entirely as to the pitiable condition of the Christians in this vilayet, and the abuses and the corruption which existed under the rule of Ferid Pasha. I mentioned to him the points enumerated in my telegram of the 8th July, and he concurred with me that it was the duty of his Government to attend to all these points. On receipt of your telegram of the 11th July, my Russian colleague, who had received a similar telegram from his Embassy, and myself framed a list of the suggestions embodied in your and his Ambassador's telegrams, and on the 13th July we presented these verbally to Tahir Pasha, citing many instances to illustrate each point. Tahir Pasha expressed his gratitude to us in aiding him in the inquiry he was making, said that he was astounded at the state of affairs, that our demands were perfectly just and necessary for the welfare of the vilayet. We discussed all the points at length and in a most friendly manner, and he promised us that his Government would carry out all these demands, but added that, with such chaos as already existed, time would be required before everything would be righted.

He asked us to give him in writing the points enumerated, and this we have done. I inclose a copy of the same. We asked him if he would give us a written acknowledgment that these demands would be carried out. He hesitated somewhat, saying that he was not the Vali, and that his stay here was only temporary, but after a little discussion promised that he would reply in that tenor to our note when sent to him.

[26593] No. 52*.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 86.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, August* 3, 1907.

A TELEGRAM from Persian Government to the following effect was communicated by instruction to-day by the Persian Chargé d'Affaires :—

Information from Urumia and Tabreez has reached Persian Government by telegraph that the Persian frontier was crossed by Turkish troops with guns within the boundaries of Oroumieh, close to Persian camp, to the west of the village of Touli, and established there for punitive purposes.

Three hours were given to the Persians in which to evacuate camp, with a threat of extermination in case they did not comply. Turks fired on camp, although Persians obeyed at once. Abandoning their tents, the Persians then left.

A request for intervention has been made to His Majesty's Government by Persian Government.

Having conferred with your Russian colleague, representations should be made to the Sublime Porte.

(Repeated to Tehran and St. Petersburgh.)

If I may respectfully suggest to your Excellency, from my personal acquaintance with Tahir Pasha, he is invariably amiable and promises everything, but does not often perform much, so that it would be advisable to have a properly qualified representative at this Vice-Consulate, for the present at least, to help the Government to carry out these demands, and to bring to their notice any relaxation on the part of their subordinates to carry out their efforts at reform.

At the present moment Tahir Pasha is occupied in collecting evidence and complaints against Ferid Pasha. These mostly come from Moslems, and are therefore not thoroughly representative, but from bitter experience the Armenians do not dare to bring complaints against the Kurds, who they know will punish them later. Tahir Pasha realizes this, and tells me that he intends to make a tour in the vilayet, when he hopes to arrive at the true state of affairs.

I think I informed your Excellency in one of my despatches from Van last winter that at the time of Tahir Pasha leaving Van it was said by some that he was dismissed owing to the representations of Ferid Pasha. Whether this is true or not, Tahir Pasha does not love Ferid Pasha, and if I may be allowed to judge, Tahir Pasha is not therefore the man to shield Ferid Pasha's misdeeds in his Report, although he may bring the whole blame for the evil state of affairs in this vilayet on Ferid Pasha, and thus allow to go free many minor persons who are equally obnoxious to good administration.

At any rate I think the time is favourable to press the Porte to insist on Tahir Pasha putting into action the demands we have presented to him at once.

Since writing the above we have received Tahir Pasha's response to our note, a copy of which I attach. From it you will see that he answers evasively. He does not wish to have personally the responsibility of improving affairs here, and wishes to return to a peaceful life in Trebizond; and I now hear that he may leave in a few days, having collected enough information for his Report.

Under these circumstances it is of great importance for the good of the vilayet that an honest and strong Vali be appointed quickly, as the present officials are merely "carrying on" the Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) BERTRAM DICKSON,
Captain, R.F.A.

Inclosure 2 in No. 53.

Joint Note addressed to Tahir Pasha.

A son Excellence Tahir Pacha, *Bitlis, le* 13 *Juillet*, 1907.

LES Soussignés, Basile Chirkom, Consul Impérial de Russie à Bitlis; B. Dickson, Vice-Consul de Sa Majesté Britannique, ont l'honneur de transmettre ci-inclus à votre Excellence le résumé des points discutés ce matin, dans l'espoir qu'ils seront mis en exécution sans retard.

(Signé) B. CHIRKOM.
BERTRAM DICKSON,
Captain, R.F.A.

Inclosure 3 in No. 53.

Résumé of Points under Discussion.

1. LA suspension des gros abus dont les Arméniens souffrent.
2. La garantie des Arméniens contre les oppressions des Hamidiés, des Kurdes et des Circassiens.
3. Sûreté et défense de la paisible population Chrétienne contre les méfaits.
4. L'abolition des mesures dirigées vers l'émigration forcée des Arméniens, et vers l'installation dans leurs villages des Musulmans.
5. La perception régulière des impôts.
6. Restitution aux Arméniens de tous les biens pillés.
7. Restitution des Arméniennes enlevées par les Musulmans.
8. La perception régulière des dîmes.
9. La punition des coupables dans les crimes et les oppressions.

Inclosure 4 in No. 53.

Reply by Tahir Pasha.

(Translation.)

I AM honoured with your letter of the 13th July ("à la Franque") which has arrived in my hands with the inclosure. I have perused the contents of it, the conditions stated in it pertaining to the rights of all Ottoman subjects to be protected by laws and regulations, and the officials called upon to fulfil these laws and regulations being obliged to do their duty duly.

The attention of the respective officials has been called to the points (or matters) introduced in the said letter. With a view to the immediate fulfilment of their duty in respect to the law, and making efforts for the insurance of the well-being and happiness of all obedient subjects being found natural, the writing of this answer was undertaken.

[26204] No. 54.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 6.)

(No. 469.)

Therapia, July 31, 1907.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that I have received a telegram from Captain Dickson, who has now returned to Van, to the effect that the following troops have been mobilized at that place: the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 59th Regiment of Reserves, to form the garrison of Van; and the 18th, 20th, 39th, and 59th Battalions of the Hamidieh Regiment of Irregular Cavalry for service on the Persian frontier. With regard to the latter, the Vali states that Persian revolutionary troops have taken refuge at Mergavver, on the Turkish side of the frontier, and that the above movement of troops has been made with the object of evicting them.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[20503] No. 55.

Memorandum communicated to M. Cambon, August 6, 1907.

HIS Majesty's Government have had under careful consideration the Memorandum communicated by the French Ambassador on the 8th November last respecting certain outstanding questions in connection with the Award of The Hague Tribunal in the Muscat Arbitration Case.

His Majesty's Government, desirous of arriving at an early settlement of the points still under discussion, are prepared to accept the French reservations as to—

1. The finality of M. Laronce's opinion after a fresh examination of the list of dhows and flagholders;

2. The jurisdiction of the French Consul over crimes committed by an Omani on the high seas while sailing in a dhow flying the French flag; and

3. The status of the six Zanzibari dhow-owners.

They are also willing to agree to the clause in the Memorandum of the 8th November last respecting the grant of the right to fly the French flag to Mascatis in the service of French citizens resident in Oman, provided that the interpretation of this clause given in M. Cambon's Memorandum of the 26th April last is formally accepted by the French Government, and also on the understanding that natives navigating dhows entitled to fly the French flag under this special agreement will not have other privileges than those conceded to masters and crews of dhows entitled under the Award to fly the French flag, unless they come under the category of persons "actually in the service of the French," referred to in Article IV of the French Treaty with Muscat of 1844.

[25034] No. 55*.

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir, *Foreign Office, August 6, 1907.*

I LAID before Secretary Sir E. Grey your letter of the 26th ultimo relative to the Abu Musa Red Oxide Concession.

I am to state that he concurs in Mr. Secretary Morley's suggestion to approve the action proposed by the Government of India, and in his proposal to request them not to sanction any Concession which the Sheikh may propose to grant without reporting the matter home.

Sir E. Grey further concurs in the request which it is proposed to address to Messrs. Strick.

I am, &c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

Finally, His Majesty's Government would be glad if the French Government would agree to instruct the French Consul at Muscat to furnish annually to his British colleague a separate list of dhows owned by French citizens as well as a list of persons entitled to fly the French flag, in return for similar lists which would be furnished to him by His Majesty's Consul.

Foreign Office, August 6, 1907.

[26777] No. 56.

Telegrams communicated by Persian Legation, August 8, 1907.

(1.)

Prince Ala-os-Saltaneh to Persian Legation, London.

(Translation.) *August 7, 1907.*

I HAVE informed you fully in my previous telegram of the aggression of Turkish troops and tribes into Persian territory, and of the massacre and plunder and spoliation of property committed by them.

A further report has been received from Oroumi to the effect that the Turkish troops and tribes have plundered the villages of Konthia and Banounov, the property of the Zarghan-ul-Mulk, and the village of Sheikhe Lormezair, which is the property of General Hadji Aslan Khan, and they have also taken several women as prisoners. Two days ago they carried away from the village of Saatlon all the cattle and sheep, and they besieged that place from early in the evening until late the next morning with a view of massacring the inhabitants. They also plundered the village of Tazerlow, the property of Hadji Mossaddegh-os-Saltaneh. Yesterday the Turkish troops bombarded the village of Movaneh, the property of the Salar Afkham, the inhabitants of which are Christians, and they massacred ninety men and women, and took away ten young women as prisoners. You will also communicate the contents of this report to His Britannic Majesty's Minister for Foreign Affairs.

(2.)

Prince Ala-os-Saltaneh to Persian Legation, London.

(Translation.) *August 7, 1907.*

With reference to the aggression of Turkish troops into Persian territory I telegraphed to you two days ago. A telegraphic report was also received yesterday from the Governor of Oroumi.

The Beigzadegane of Dacht, who had destroyed a great many lives and had gradually appropriated the property of Persian subjects to the value of about 500,000 tomans, were also accused of killing Liberi, the American missionary. Therefore Emamgholi Mirza, the Governor of Oroumi, by order of the Persian Government, and for the purpose of maintaining order in the country, and at the proposal of the American Legation, was commissioned to take measures for the capture and punishment of the Beigzadegane and other unruly Persian tribes, and a small camp under the command of the Madjd-os-Saltaneh was organized near the village of Touli, 6 farsakhs from the Turkish frontier. The Government also instructed Emamgholi Mirza to arrest those of the Beigzadegane who were accused of the murder of Liberi, and give assurance to those who were not accused. But those accused fled into Turkish territory.

Meanwhile, the Beigzadegane received letters from one called Rustam, resident of Darradari, which is in Turkish territory, and also a letter from the son of Sheikh Sudighe and a letter from one called Amroliah, who are Turkish military officials. These letters were shown by the Beigzadegane themselves to Madjd-os-Saltaneh, and have been preserved. The letter states that the Turkish Government will support them well, and troops and artillery will arrive, and urges them not to surrender to the Persians.

On Thursday, the 21st, four tapour of soldiers and about 5,000 Turkish tribesmen and Persian rebellious tribes, together with the followers of the son of Sheikh Sadighe, surrounded the Persian camp from four sides and began firing. The Madjd-os-Saltaneh sent Dr. Baba Khan, the camp doctor, to the Commander of the Turkish troops to ask him the reason for entering Persian territory and for suddenly bombarding the Persian Government camp. He answered that he was ordered either to massacre the whole camp or drive it away, and said that he would give them only three hours within which to withdraw. The Madjd-os-Saltaneh sent a second message asking that at least time should be given that he might ask for instructions from the Imperial Government. The reply was that the Commander could not modify the statement which he had already made. As the Madjd-os-Saltaneh had no permission to make a defence against and to confront the Turkish troops, he was compelled to remove the camp in order to pitch it at a spot farther away. But the Turkish troops began firing on the camp before the expiration of the three hours, and fired six times in succession with six-chambered guns and also threw bombs.

The Madjd-os-Saltaneh and the whole camp were obliged to abandon stores, ammunition, and all their belongings, the value of which amounts to 100,000 tomans, and leave for the town with all their guns. Several men of the Gharapapaghe and Chardouli cavalry and some soldiers were killed, and the Major of the 7th Regiment, Djalil Khan, and the Sarparest and his son, a Lieutenant in the same regiment, together with some soldiers, were taken prisoners. The invaders destroyed the Christian village of Movaneh, in the district of Tarkevaraste, the musketeers of which served in the Persian camp and are Christians, massacred eighteen men and sixty women and children who were Christians, and plundered their properties.

The tribesmen inhabiting Turkish territory and the Persian rebellious tribes did all they could during the last two or three days in the way of massacring, plundering, and pillaging in the neighbourhood of the village of Berandize, in the district of Oroumi, and other villages. Women and children, both Chia and Souni, for fear of their lives have abandoned their villages, pastures, and belongings without any one to take care of them, and are leaving for the town.

The British and Russian Legations here have been informed of all this, and in view of the fact that the British and Russian Governments are mediators and arbitrators in frontier disputes between Persia and Turkey, the British and Russian Legations have been requested to communicate these facts to their respective Governments, so that they may instruct their Ambassadors in Constantinople to co-operate with our Ambassador in making representations in regard to these matters and in demanding an indemnity from the aggressors and compensation for the losses sustained by the camp and the inhabitants of the villages, and give satisfaction to the Imperial Persian Government and the withdrawal of the Turkish troops and aggressors from Persian territory.

You will also inform His Britannic Majesty's Minister for Foreign Affairs of these events, and make the same request which has been made by the Imperial Persian Government from the British and Russian Legations here, and telegraph the result as soon as possible.

I write this also for your further information :—

The Imperial Persian Government thinking that perhaps, when punishment would be inflicted on the Beigzadegane, they would fly into Turkish territory, before taking any steps to punish them, the Foreign Office officially informed the Turkish Embassy, and requested them, should the Beigzadegane at the time of their punishment desire to go into Turkish territory, to prevent them from doing so, and to send them back, and after the Turkish Embassy had been informed that Emamgholi Mirza organized a camp near Touli, Dachte, and Tarkevarham, which are in the district of Oroumi, and are in Persian territory.

[26755] No. 57.

Aide-mémoire communicated by the Turkish Ambassador, August 9, 1907.

SUR la foi de télégrammes envoyés de Téhéran, certains journaux d'Europe annoncent que les troupes Impériales auraient passé la frontière près d'Urmia et attaqué l'armée Persane.

Les faits ainsi présentés dénaturent la vérité.

Tout le monde sait que le Gouvernement Impérial n'a aucune visée d'extension.

Loin de lui pareille pensée. Les troupes Impériales ne se sont portées à aucune agression.

Elles n'ont fait et ne font que maintenir l'ordre et la tranquillité que des bandes venues de Perse cherchent à troubler.

Les incursions de ces bandes, parmi lesquelles se trouve même bon nombre d'agitateurs Arméniens, se répétant, sans que le Gouvernement Persan, malgré les plus vives représentations du Gouvernement Impérial, prenne aucune mesure pour les empêcher, force a été [*sic*] aux autorités Impériales de les repousser par les armes.

C'est un incident de ce genre que le Gouvernement Persan représente comme une attaque de la part du Gouvernement Ottoman, alors que les troupes Impériales ne font que veiller à la sûreté de la frontière et à l'intégrité du territoire Ottoman.

Ambassade Impériale de Turquie, Londres,
le 8 *Août*, 1907.

[26756] No. 58.

Aide-mémoire communicated by the Turkish Ambassador, August 9, 1907.

RAPPORT adressé par les autorités Impériales à la Sublime Porte sur l'incident des environs d'Urmia :

C'est une armée composée de trois mille Persans et Arméniens qui a fait irruption dans les communes de Terkuvar et de Beradoste et incendié les villages, obligeant les habitants à se réfugier sur les montagnes.

Comme les dits Persans et Arméniens se sont portés de là à Merkuvar, malgré la présence d'une garnison Ottomane, les troupes Impériales ont dû les repousser jusqu'au delà de la frontière.

Ils ont perdu dans cette rencontre trente hommes, dont dix-sept Arméniens.

Ambassade Impériale de Turquie, Londres,
le 9 *Août*, 1907.

[26822] No. 59.

Sir C. Spring-Rice to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 10.)

(No. 212.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Gulahek, August* 10, 1907.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

The Atabeg says that the Sultan insists on his right to protect Sunni Kurds, whether Persian or no, if ill-treated by Shias. This probably refers to the Persian punitive expedition against the murderers of Christians. Conflicts are taking place between the marauders and the villagers. The tribes have done great damage, though the Turks have made no further encroachment. The Government and people rely on intervention of Ambassadors at Constantinople. The Hague Conference has been appealed to. The excitement in the provinces is very great.

The Firman Firma is leaving for Tabreez to-morrow with four regiments and six guns. He told me that in ten days 1,600 local troops would be on the spot.

[26832] No. 60.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 11.)

(No. 111.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, August* 11, 1907.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

I immediately communicated the substance of your telegram No. 94 of the 8th instant to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and at the same time urged the necessity of the Porte at once taking steps to prevent proceedings which might lead to very serious consequences.

I am informed by his Excellency that orders for the punishment of those proved guilty of the excesses alleged to have been committed and for the withdrawal of the troops within the contested zone were sent to Van on the 9th instant.

The Turks say that they have captured some Armenian agitators who were among the Persians, but they admit that the frontier was crossed in pursuit of the Persians.

The Delimitation Commission, under Zeki Pasha, at Mosul, is said to be about to proceed under orders to make a joint inquiry with the Persians.

[26829] No. 61.

Sir C. Spring-Rice to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 11.)

(No. 213.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Gulahek, August 11, 1907.*

SEVERAL hundred Christian refugees are reported by His Majesty's Vice-Consul, Tabreez, to be with the Russian Consul at Urmia. The anxiety there is great, and the situation unchanged.

He also reports that Gangatchin, a large village north-west of Dasht, belonging to Nejd, has been occupied by Turks.

[26830] No. 62.

Sir C. Spring-Rice to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 11.)

(No. 214.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Gulahek, August 11, 1907.*

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

Telegram *en clair* from Persian Ambassador at Constantinople reports Sultan says Persian aggression was responsible for Turkish action, and suggests inquiry into affair on the spot by the Commissioners now at Mosul.

[26839] No. 63.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 12.)

(No. 478.)
Sir, *Constantinople, August 4, 1907.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 428 of the 18th ultimo, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout, reporting the arrival of Yussuf Pasha, the new Governor-General of the Lebanon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 63.

Consul-General Sir R. Hay Drummond-Hay to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 66.)
Sir, *Beyrout, July 25, 1907.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 18th instant, I have the honour to report the arrival yesterday of Yussuf Pasha, the newly appointed Governor-General of the Lebanon. He was met at the landing-stage by the Vali of Beyrout, who accompanied him to his hotel with a large escort, followed by Madame Yussuf Pasha in a carriage with Emir Mustapha Arslan. I called on the Governor in the afternoon of the same day, and he returned my visit this morning, accompanied by his chief dragoman. He will leave for Beitoddine to-morrow to take up his official duties. Although our interviews were of short duration, and other persons were present on each occasion, Yussuf Pasha referred to the pleasant evening he had passed at the Embassy, and expressed a hope that we would succeed in maintaining the excellent relations that already existed between him and your Excellency. I replied, assuring him of my earnest desire to cultivate a good understanding, and that he could rely on my warm co-operation in all matters connected with the administration of his

province. If the sound advice given to Yussuf Pasha by your Excellency is carefully observed by him his task will be considerably simplified, and he will win the respect of all the inhabitants of the Lebanon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. HAY DRUMMOND-HAY.

[26843] No. 64.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 12.)

(No. 482.)
Sir, *Therapia, August 5, 1907.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 446 of the 23rd ultimo, I have the honour to transmit copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Kharput, reporting on the situation in that vilayet.

With regard to the remarks made by the Vali to Mr. Heard on the subject of German influence in those regions, I think it right to say that the German missions are, as far as I know, rather discouraged than encouraged by their Government. At any rate, a German lady who is, I believe, at the head of this charitable undertaking, complained to me some years ago that her Government disapproved of her work and gave her no support.

Mr. Heard was, I think, somewhat indiscreet in speaking to the Vali in a spirit hostile to Germany, and his attention has been drawn to the matter.

As regards the Defterdar, who is notoriously corrupt and was dismissed by order of the Grand Vizier, and subsequently reinstated by Palace influence, his Highness has given me to understand that he threatened to resign if his orders were not obeyed, whereupon the Palace gave way.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 64.

Vice-Consul Heard to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 12.)
Sir, *Kharput, July 17, 1907.*

IN confirmation of my telegram of to-day, I have the honour to report as follows on the situation at Kharput, as far as I have been able to judge of it since my arrival on the 13th instant.

The campaign organized by Khalid Bey against the corruption of local officials had its origin in the discovery of the scheme of bribery whereby Armenians desirous of going to America were substituted for others who had permission to return, and some £T. 30,000 or £T. 40,000 are said to have changed hands, as reported in my despatch No. 8 of the 8th June.

The Chief Commissary of Police was transferred, the Commissary was imprisoned, and the Defterdar was put under arrest in his own house. The latter, however, through the influence of his father-in-law at Constantinople, obtained an Iradé ordering his release, which was a severe blow to the Vali's prestige. The quarrel between the latter and the former is of long standing, and was largely fomented by their wives, who are bitterly hostile to each other. The Vali's attempt to suppress bribery, which, though praiseworthy in itself, was undertaken in a somewhat rash and tactless manner, has stirred up against him the entire official class of Kharput, which is now actively intriguing for his recall. Finding that the matter was too difficult for him to dispose of personally, he has turned it over to the local Court, and he now finds the President of the Criminal Court, the Judicial Inspector, and others blocking him at every turn. His Excellency states that the Grand Vizier, on whom I understand he depends for his support, was much annoyed at the reinstatement of the Defterdar through Palace interference, and I gather that the dismissal of the Vali would mean a triumph for Palace influence over that of the Porte.

With regard to the drastic measures undertaken against Armenians, the Vali changed his attitude some three weeks ago, and I think that he is unlikely to raise the question again. It would seem that on discovering the corruption in connection with the emigration scheme above mentioned, his Excellency became alarmed for fear that he

should be accused of carelessness in failing to suppress it before, and, as on a similar occasion in Diarbekir, went to the opposite extreme of instituting drastic and oppressive measures against them, supported, it is true, by a former firadé, by which he hoped to clear his reputation of any imputation of want of vigilance. On finding that this expedient raised more trouble for him in other quarters, he was probably glad to let it drop.

His Excellency has made me indirectly aware that he is most anxious that I should report favourably upon him, and I have let him know through the same channel, that as long as he refrains from raising the expatriation question, and otherwise oppressing the Armenians, I should not be ill-disposed towards him. I further intimated that his conflict with the local officials was a matter in which I was not interested, and which did not affect my attitude to him. I hinted also that anything he might do to check German influence, which I have reason to believe is endeavouring to extend itself in this region, would be not disagreeable to me. His Excellency stated in reply that he had already informed the Grand Vizier of his relaxation of repressive measures towards the Armenians, and gave his word that he would not resume them.

As regards German political influence, he said that he was aware that an attempt was being made to establish it under the guise of missionary enterprise, and, judging from what I am informed is happening elsewhere, this is not improbable. I may mention here that my American colleague has shrewd suspicions of the sincerity of the designs of the German missions here, and has observed that they seem to have unlimited capital behind them. His Excellency regarded most unfavourably, he said, the arrangement which the American mission here proposes to make with the Germans, whereby Malatia, Arabkir, Chumushgezek, Peri, Kighi, and Palu were to be handed over to the latter as their field of operations, and added that he would do his best to block it.

In a subsequent interview the Vali spoke to me much in the same sense as above, and renewed his promise to cease his oppression of the Armenians. He spoke at length on the intrigues which were being made against him, and mentioned amongst other things that his enemies had failed to concoct a Mazbata against him, as the people, who are the gainers by the suppression of bribery, refused to sign; also that the Defterdar had tried to arrange with the Mutessarif of Khozat a bogus disturbance, calling for the presence of troops and guns, so that it might be laid to his charge that he was unable to keep order. There is no doubt that his position is extremely critical at present.

Summarising my reasons for suggesting to your Excellency the desirability of supporting Khalid Bey at the present moment, I would mention that—

1. That he is unlikely to oppress the Armenians in future for fear of losing your Excellency's support, which he is apparently so anxious to obtain.

2. That though hasty and ill-judged in his actions, and reputed, not incorrectly, to be somewhat fanatical, he is at any rate a man of some strength of character, who might do good if his energies were employed in the right direction.

3. That a victory obtained over him through Palace influence by the local officials, who do not appear to be more reputable than the average of their class, would make it difficult for his successor to remain independent and steer a straight course.

4. That his isolated position will make him anxious to obtain the goodwill of the American Consul and myself, and thus more disposed to listen to our recommendations.

5. That he is known to be hostile to German political designs.

My American colleague shares my views on the subject of Khalid Bey's character and the undesirability of his dismissal at present.

(Confidential.)

I gather that the American missionaries do not regard the Vali with favour, and would not be sorry to see him removed. I cannot discover that they have at present any specific complaint against him, and strongly suspect that they are somewhat influenced in their views by certain Armenian Notables who have incurred, not always without reason, the hostility of Khalid Bey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. B. HEARD.

[26844] No. 65.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 12.)

(No. 488.)

Sir, *Therapia, August 6, 1907.*

I COMMUNICATED yesterday to the Russian Ambassador the substance of your telegram No. 86 of the 23rd instant, respecting Turkish aggression on the Persian frontier, and subsequently spoke to the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the same subject.

The latter said that the Persian Ambassador had also made representations to him and appealed to the friendly feelings of the Ottoman Government not to take advantage of their present internal difficulties to cause trouble, which would greatly embarrass the Persian Government at this moment of supreme difficulty.

I said that I had your instructions strongly to support the representations of the Persian Ambassador, and I desired to know what assurances he authorized me to convey to you.

Tewfik Pasha replied that an inquiry would at once be made by telegraph into the statements made by me and the Persian Ambassador, and that if it were found that the Turkish troops had crossed the frontier they would be told to withdraw.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[26849] No. 66.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 12.)

(No. 488.)

Sir, *Constantinople, August 6, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Acting Consul-General at Bagdad, reporting the opening of a branch of the Imperial Ottoman Bank at Mosul.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 66.

Major Ramsay to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Bagdad, July 3, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the Imperial Ottoman Bank has opened a branch at Mosul, on the Tigris.

2. I inclose a translation of the Circular issued by the Bank to the people of Mosul.

3. This despatch is being addressed to India and the Board of Trade.

I have, &c.
(Signed) O. RAMSAY, *Major,*
Officiating Political Resident in Turkish Arabia and Acting British Consul-General, Bagdad.

Inclosure 2 in No. 66.

Circular issued by the Imperial Ottoman Bank.

Commercial Transactions which can be made with the Imperial Ottoman Bank at Mosul.

1. SALE and purchase of bills of exchange by mail and by telegram on the Ottoman Dominions, Europe, &c.

2. Discount of promissory notes ("campialas") and lending of money at moderate prices.

3. Opening of accounts current against promissory notes to be deposited.
4. Mortgage of goods, such as thread, grain, skins, wool, galls, &c., and advance of money against them.
5. Acceptance of promissory notes on the bazaar for recovery and payment of money after its receipt for a slight commission.
6. Advance of money against jewellery, gold and silver.
7. Acceptance of money, with or without interest, as per specified conditions.
8. Opening of accounts current for merchants for the sole purpose of facilitating their trade.
9. Opening of family savings bank accounts.
10. Purchase and import of various kinds of shares, such as railway, Egyptian Bank shares, &c.
11. Acceptance, as guarantee, of this sort of shares, and advance of money against them.
12. Acceptance of goods for dispatch to European agencies, and advance of money against them.
13. In fact, any commercial transaction which may be in accordance with the Bank's Regulations.

Note.—The Direction of the Imperial Ottoman Bank has the honour to give the necessary explanations regarding the nature and condition of the Bank's business, and will be very glad to consider any question that may be put before it.

[26856] No. 67.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received August* 12.)

(No. 495.)

Sir, *Therapia, August* 6, 1907.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 356 of the 15th June respecting the Maghil case, I have the honour to report that I have continued to press the Sublime Porte to have the sentences passed on the culprits by the court-martial publicly executed.

I found that the legal advisers of the Seraskeirate and the Porte objected strongly to the legality of the condemnation on the ground that the court-martial was incompetent to try civilians in the absence of a declaration of a state of siege, and that culprits condemned by default could only be executed after retrial.

I pointed out to the Grand Vizier that the culprits condemned by default had already been retried, and with regard to the alleged illegality of the trial by court-martial, I declared myself utterly unable to understand how the Porte or the Seraskeirate could stultify a decision promulgated by Imperial Iradé. The procedure followed had been ordered by the Sultan, and to reverse it now would be to lower the dignity of His Imperial Majesty, as well as dangerous to public order in Bussorah, where, as the Grand Vizier knew, the condition of the country was already critical. I urged, therefore, that the sentences should be carried out without further delay.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[27099] No. 68.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(*Received August* 12.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy dated the 30th July relative to the affairs of the Aden hinterland.

India Office, August 12, 1907.

Inclosure in No. 68.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P. *July* 30, 1907.

YOUR telegram of the 25th July as to withdrawal of Political Officer from Dthala.

After consultation with Army Department, instructions, in accordance with your telegrams of the 14th and 18th June, were issued on the 27th June to the Bombay Government and the Political Resident at Aden. Two telegrams on the subject have been received from the Government of Bombay. Following is purport :—

(1.)

Dated 16th July.

"Resident at Aden telegraphs :—

"'A report will be forwarded by this week's mail on matters involved in correspondence ending with your telegram of the 13th instant. As regards following points no fresh disputes are anticipated :—

"'(*a.*) Scheme of paying Kotaibi through Ameer.

"'(*b.*) Proposals regarding Haushabi stipend and Abdali occupation of Nobat Dakim.

"'(*c.*) Redistribution of posts.

"'My recommendation is that early conclusion of Agreements on the lines of a draft which accompanies the report should be effected, with simultaneous grant of presents provided for therein; immediate destruction of Dar-al-Kabtam in arrangement with Alawai would then be carried out; and subsequently, on withdrawal to Nobat Dakim, the Sulcik fort would also be destroyed. Upon final withdrawal to Aden, Nobat Dakim to be handed over to Abdali.'

"Resident's report is being awaited before orders are issued fixing the date of evacuation of Dthala."

(2.)

Dated 23rd July.

"Following telegram received from Resident at Aden :—

"'Evacuation of Dthala. A report suggesting slight modifications of Agreements is being dispatched by this mail. I would propose that evacuation should take place at my discretion within one month of the signing of Agreements proposed.'

"Bombay Government concur in Resident's proposal."

It will be seen that Government of Bombay's proposals involve Political Officer being retained at Dthala beyond the 29th July, the date on which, under instructions given in your telegram of the 14th June, he should leave. The draft Agreements are under consideration pending receipt of final corrections from Aden and views of the Government of Bombay, and our orders on these will be communicated to Resident by telegraph. We think it would be undesirable to demolish posts and to evacuate Dthala before the Agreements have been approved. We propose to instruct Resident, should you concur in this view, to proceed in meantime with arrangements for evacuation at the earliest possible date, on the assumption that no material alteration in the Agreements will be made. A reply to your request for our opinion as to the advice to be given to the Amir of Dthala as to affairs on Turkish side of border will be communicated in due course.

[26755] No. 69.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 327.) *Foreign Office, August* 13, 1907.

Sir,

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency copies of two *aide-mémoire* left at this Office by the Turkish Ambassador on the 9th instant,* giving the official Turkish version of the recent invasion of Persian territory by Ottoman troops.

In handing me these communications Musurus Pasha observed that he assumed that the information as to this incident which had reached His Majesty's Government came from Persian sources, and he expressed the hope that I would, if questioned further on the subject in Parliament, make use of the particulars now supplied by his Government.

I told his Excellency that I would bear in mind the wish which he had expressed, but I observed that the important point was that the Turkish troops should be kept within their own frontier.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

[27740] No. 70.

Sir A. Nicolson to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 15.)

(No. 145.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *St. Petersburgh, August* 15, 1907.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier dispute.

His Majesty's Consul at Batoum telegraphs to-day as follows:—

"I learn from a trustworthy source that, in view of possible development of present situation on Turco-Persian frontier, orders have been issued to the 1st and 2nd Caucasian Rifle Brigades, which are stationed at Tiflis and in the government of Erivan, to be ready to proceed to Persia."

[27538] No. 71.

Prince Alu-os-Saltaneh to Persian Minister.—(Communicated by Persian Minister, August 16, 1907.)

(Translation.)
(Telegraphic.) *August* 16, 1907.

WITH reference to the aggression of the Turkish troops into the boundaries of Oroumi and your assurances as to the result of the steps taken by His Britannic Majesty's Ambassador in Constantinople, viz., that orders have been issued for the withdrawal of the Turkish troops, and that those who have been guilty of excesses would be punished.

According to a telegram freshly received by the Government of Oroumi, the latter Government is informed that 100 Turkish troops arrived at the village of Baude yesterday, and they have with them one field gun; and they have informed the villages situated near the city that they must prepare to give them contributions in kind. The Governor and the inhabitants of Oroumi are at the telegraph office waiting to know what they are to do.

You will at once communicate these facts to His Britannic Majesty's Minister for Foreign Affairs, and beg that urgent telegraphic instructions may kindly be sent to His Britannic Majesty's Ambassador in Constantinople asking his Excellency to energetically support and assist our Ambassador in demanding the withdrawal of the Turkish troops, the punishment of the aggressors, and the compensation of the relatives of those who have been murdered and plundered.

You yourself know that immediate steps are necessary for the withdrawal of the Turkish troops. On the one hand the Foreign Office promises their withdrawal, and on the other hand, on the very day when this assurance is given, the troops continue

* Nos. 57 and 58.

their aggression. In view of the communication from His Britannic Majesty's Minister for Foreign Affairs in regard to the withdrawal of the Turkish troops, it is strange that the latter advance instead of retreating. Take immediate steps and telegraph the result as soon as possible.

[27542] No. 72.

Sir C. Spring-Rice to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 16.)

(No. 219.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Gulahek, August* 16, 1907.

LETTER to following effect was addressed to the President of the National Assembly by Secretary of the Russian Legation on the 9th instant:—

Letter begins by giving assurances of Russia's friendly sentiments towards Persia to Assembly, and of wish to protect and help her; then draws attention to disturbances on Russian frontier, pointing out that in the interests both of Russia and Persia they may necessitate steps to restore order; concludes with a hint that Russian army may be employed for this object.

Answer, which concludes with a reference to the Baku massacres, was sent with approval of Assembly expressing gratitude for friendly sentiments of Legation and requesting the elimination from the letter of the threatening clauses.

It is believed here that letter was arranged in concert with the Government, and great excitement has been caused.

My Russian colleague has not alluded to this, though I have seen him frequently of late.

[27543] No. 73.

Sir C. Spring-Rice to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 16.)

(No. 220.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Gulahek, August* 16, 1907.

THE Russian note referred to in my telegram No. 219 of the 16th instant was not meant for publication. It was intended to be privately submitted to the President of the Assembly as a draft.

[27544] No. 74.

Sir C. Spring-Rice to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 16.)

(No. 221.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Gulahek, August* 16, 1907.

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier.

The Persian Government beg the support of His Majesty's Government to procure compensation, punishment, and withdrawal of Turkish troops, who, they state, have now occupied Band, a mile and a-half from Urmia.

[27544] No. 75.

Sir Edward Grey to Persian Chargé d'Affaires.

SIR EDWARD GREY presents his compliments to the Persian Chargé d'Affaires, and has the honour to inform him that on the 15th instant telegraphic instructions were sent to His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople to consult with his Russian and American colleagues, and to inform the Sublime Porte that the orders sent by them to Van on the 9th August, for the withdrawal of the Ottoman troops within the neutral zone and for the punishment of those guilty of alleged excesses, had evidently been disregarded, and that, in view of the fresh information received from His Majesty's Minister at Tehran, that Ottoman troops had occupied the Baradust district as far as Kotur, and had attempted to impose Ottoman sovereignty

on the Christian refugees, His Majesty's Government took a most serious view of the complications which might arise.

Sir N. O'Conor was also instructed to urge the immediate dispatch of further orders for the complete withdrawal of the troops.

Foreign Office, August 17, 1907.

[27764] No. 76.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 19.)

(No. 502.)

Sir, *Constantinople, August* 13, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Beirut relative to the reading of the Firman appointing Yussuf Pasha Governor-General of the Lebanon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 76.

Consul-General Sir R. Hay Drummond-Hay to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 68.)

Sir, *Beirut, August* 1, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to report that I have, according to custom, deputed the dragoman of this Consulate-General to go to Beittedine, in order that he may be present at the reading—and represent this Consulate-General—of the Firman of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan appointing Yussuf Pasha Governor-General of the Lebanon, which is taking place to-day.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. HAY DRUMMOND-HAY.

[27765] No. 77.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 19.)

(No. 503.)

Sir, *Constantinople, August* 13, 1907.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 502 of to-day's date, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout, reporting the reading of the Firman appointing Yussuf Pasha Governor-General of the Lebanon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 77.

Consul-General Sir R. Hay Drummond-Hay to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 71.)

Sir, *Beyrout, August* 3, 1907.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 68 of the 1st instant, the dragoman of this Consulate-General, Mr. Shoucair, returned from Beittedine this morning, and reported that a very large gathering of Lebanese was present at the reading of the Firman by Yussuf Pasha. The Consulates of the foreign Powers were represented by their dragomans and the Patriarchs by their Bishops. After the reading of the Firman and several speeches in praise of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan and of Yussuf Pasha had been made by the religious heads, a luncheon was offered by the Governor-General. There was no incident which marred the proceedings, and there appeared to be a general feeling of satisfaction among officials and others at the neutral line of conduct so far adopted by Yussuf Pasha.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. HAY DRUMMOND-HAY.

[27663] No. 78.

Sir F. Lascelles to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 19.)

(No. 358.)

Sir, *Berlin, August* 14, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the translation of an article in the "Cologne Gazette" of the 5th instant on the subject of the Hedjaz Railway. The previous article to which it refers was on much the same lines, but gave far less interesting details.

I have, &c.
(For Sir F. Lascelles),
(Signed) J. DE SALIS.

Inclosure in No. 78.

Extract from the "Cologne Gazette," of August 5, 1907.

THE HEDJAZ RAILWAY.

(Translation.)

WITH regard to the report from Constantinople published in the "Cologne Gazette" of the 25th July, the following details concerning the construction of the Hedjaz line are perhaps of interest:—

The construction, which was officially commenced on the 1st September, 1900, and will consequently shortly finish its seventh year, will then have to show an advance from Damascus to the south of about 850 kilom. In calculating the average of work accomplished, the fact must not be overlooked that the difficult branch line from Deraa to Haifa, on the Mediterranean (101 kilom.), built in 1903–6, also belongs to this railway; there have been, therefore, 1,011 kilom. built in seven years, which means a yearly average construction of 148 kilom., which corresponds to Geheimrat von Kapp's rough calculation of 150 kilom. Herr von Kapp, at the immediate instance of the Sultan, after travelling over the first part of the line, sent in a Report in 1901, laying down the principles for the organization and subsequent construction of the line, and in 1905 undertook another journey and produced another Report.

Already in the first Report he referred both to the indispensableness of the connection with Haifa, and the advisability of the extremely difficult connection of Maan with Akaba, in the first place at least as a strategic road, and above all to the idea of constructing a line from the south, *i.e.*, from Jeddah viâ Mecca to Medina. Only the line to Haifa was constructed. The branch line Maan–Akaba, for the construction of which an Irade was issued in the autumn of 1904, fell through in consequence, it is said, of the objections of an Embassy at Constantinople, and the useful and important connection between Jeddah and Mecca (75 kilom.) also fell through owing to the fears of certain Constantinople cliques of a possible *coup de main* against Mecca before that town was connected with the north by rail and therefore defendable. In the meanwhile, however, measures were taken to carry out the foundations of the line at least from Mecca to Medina, so that the materials arriving from the north can be pushed on from Medina to Mecca in a comparatively short time. As Medina is roughly 1,450 kilom., and Mecca 1,850 kilom. from Damascus, there remain on the 1st September, 1907, 500 and 900 kilom. still to build, *i.e.*, the line has nearly reached half-way to Mecca. It can be finished as far as Medina in 1910, and as far as Mecca in 1913, and the latter date can be advanced by a year if the foundations from Mecca to Medina are really laid in the next three or four years.

In any case, the work accomplished up till now by Turkey is a very admirable effort, which shows what that country is capable of doing in a given case, and proves what sensible strategical and political interest the Sultan and the leading men in Turkey take in this railway. For it is a question in the last resort of insuring the possession of the holy cities of Medina and Mecca. The idea has already been expressed more than once of making the Red Sea an Egyptian inland sea by annexing its eastern shore to Egypt, and, by taking possession of the holy cities, of possibly seeing the Khalifate handed over to the Khedive or to a subservient Emir of Mecca. There is also the idea that the rebellious tribes in Yemen might become dangerous from the south. In any case, these fears are the mainsprings for the unusually large sums given by the Turks and other Mahommedans for the Hedjaz Railway. On the

1st September, 1906, these sums amounted to 57,000,000 fr., and they must have risen in the course of this year by about 10,000,000 fr., so that the financial backing of the railway seems assured.

The real author and driving force of this great work, is, apart from the Sultan, His Majesty's Second Secretary and Chamberlain, Izzet Pasha, to whose first-rate ability, indefatigable power of work, and iron energy, the present success of the scheme is chiefly due It must not be forgotten that the technical manager of the construction is the German engineer, Meissner Pasha, who has spent his whole career from foreman to Chief Engineer on the railways built in Turkey under the direction of Geheimrat von Kapp, and was, therefore, specially suited for this post. Germany, who has never concealed her friendship for Turkey and her interest in her strengthening at home and abroad, can only greet the success of this great work with pleasure, and wish it a successful conclusion undelayed by difficulties from within or without.

[28053] No. 79.

Captain Sykes to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 21.)

Dear Sir Edward, *Menethorpe, Malton, August 14, 1907.*

AS I see that there is some little trouble on the Persian-Turkish frontier I venture to forward to you the complete list of Kurdish tribes I have compiled from my notes during my last journey. If you send to the Royal Geographical Society they will provide you with the map of which the inclosed is a key.

I think that the list will afford considerable assistance in making out the true meaning of information emanating from native sources.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) MARK SYKES.

Inclosure in No. 79.

Report by Captain Sykes of a Journey through the Turkish Provinces, giving a List of Kurdish Tribes.

Preface.

THE materials collected in the ensuing pages are the results of about 6,000 miles of riding and innumerable conversations with policemen, muleteers, Mullahs, Chieftains, sheep-drovers, horse-dealers, carriers, and other people capable of giving one first-hand information. The results, I fear, are extremely meagre, but I hope that they may prove of use to future travellers

As hardly anything has been written on the subject in the English language heretofore I have not been able to make a study of the Kurds from a bibliographical point of view. However, I trust that this will not detract from the interest of the work. I may add that I had among my servants on my last journey representatives from the three most important sections of the Kurds, so that I was able to obtain interpreters without any great difficulty—a matter of some importance amidst the conflicting dialects of the nomads and sedentary mountaineers.

In preparing the following list of the various tribes of the Kurdish race I have endeavoured to simplify the work of future students by marking down and cataloguing as many of the tribes as have come either directly or indirectly under my notice. After various abortive attempts at setting them down in a manner comprehensible to any one but myself, I have decided, for the purposes of this work, to break up the regions inhabited by Kurds into six zones. To each of these zones a section of the catalogue is devoted, each section containing a separate enumeration. Thus, in the alphabetical list a tribe will be found—as, for instance, the Merzigi, 76 B, Section A. To find the position of the tribe the reader must look in Zone A on the map for the number 76. He will find this number is connected to a chain of letters; the letter B in this chain will mark the spot where this tribe is to be found. In the catalogue he will find such particulars as I can supply under the number 76B in the printed Section A.

Before closing this preface may I say that the zones marked on the map are not ethnological, but merely a convenient form of grouping.

SECTION A.

Introduction.

I have chosen this zone as the first to be dealt with chiefly because the Kurds dwelling in it are apparently the descendants of those ancient inhabitants of Cordueni who harassed Xenophon's retreat, and is at least the theatre of the Kurds' first appearance on the stage of history.

The zone, which is bounded on the north by Lake Van and the Armenian tableland, on the west by the Tigris, and on the south by the plains of Irak, is densely populated, and I should imagine that the majority of its inhabitants are Kurds. However, we have a considerable foreign element in the plains, and it may be that some of the tribes mentioned in my list are not, in fact, Kurdish tribes, but branches of other peoples who have become affiliated to the original mountain race. The foreign—or, at least, non-Kurdish—stocks may briefly be enumerated as the Arabo-Aramean population of Mossul; the pure Arameans, as typified in the Nestorian and Jacobite Christians of Ain' Kawa, Akra, and Keui Sanjak; the Turkish peoples of Altyn Kioprü, Kerkuk, and Erbil; and the Bedouin and Felhahin Arabs on the banks of the Tigris and eastward of Mossul on the plain.

The two peoples in this zone concerning whom I am completely in doubt are the Shabak (No. 5) and Bejwan (No. 10) and the Nestorian Christians of Hakkiari, Amadia, and Zakho. The presence of the latter are denoted by a black +. The question as to whether these Nestorian Christians of Hakkiari, who have a tribal organization, are indigenous Kurds or fugitive Christians is, I think, still an open one. Several learned Kurdish Notables are of opinion that the Nestorians of Hakkiari are Kurds who were converted to Christianity before the advent of Al Islam. On the other hand, the Christian clergy are firmly convinced that this is not the case. Personally I suspect that both theories are in part true, and that when the Christians fled from Mossul and Irak they took refuge with the Kurdish Christians of Hakkiari. This would make the Episcopal families new comers, just as many of the Kurdish Moslem Chiefs trace their ancestry to Arabian Emirs. I regret that I was unable to obtain particulars as to the names of the Nestorian tribes, but it is to be hoped that the English Mission of the Archbishop of Canterbury will some day supply the deficiency.

With regard to the Kurds, I think they may be divided into three classes:—

Class I.—Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, who are the semi-nomads of the plains and southern hills.

Class II.—Nos. 21, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41 A, 44, 48, 52, 53, 53 A, 65, 68, 71 A, 71 B, 71 C, 72, 73, who are the sedentary mountain tribes.

Class III.—The semi-nomadic mountaineers, comprising the remainder of the tribes with the exception of No. 50.

As regards Class I, the tribes catalogued under these figures are very similar to one another in habits and appearance. They are usually wealthy shepherds, and only cultivate the ground for their own subordinate purposes, though they frequently employ extraneous labour for agriculture and traffic in the produce thus obtained. They are expert smiths, weavers, and tent-makers. Mentally they are far superior to the majority of Kurds, being apt to education, astute men of business, and very industrious. They live under the rule of hereditary tribal Nobles, who are usually very quarrelsome; feuds and intertribal wars being very common.

These semi-nomads are known as the Baba or Baban Kurds, and are noted for their chivalry, valour, and thieving proclivities. They are all great horsemen and fine rifle shots, having of late years discarded the lance and sword in favour of the rifle.

I should imagine that the great cavalry armies of the Parthians were recruited from similar tribes, as the present evolutions and tactics of these people resemble those of the troops of Surenas as described in Plutarch's "Life of Crassus." The Baban Kurds hold a great reverence for Khalid-ibn-Walid, whom they say converted them from Paganism and the worship of fire.

All the tribes mentioned in this class are strictly orthodox Sunni Moslems. Their mode of life is as follows:—

During the months of October, November, December, January, and February they dwell in villages in the vicinity of the numbers as marked on the map, in March they go

into tents and remain in them till early in June, at which period many families from each tribe migrate to the Wazna district with their flocks; during the summer months of July, August, and September, whether at Wazna or elsewhere, they lay up their tents and construct bowers of green wood, in which they live until the autumn nights grow chilly, when they return to their villages.

Most of the noble families of the tribes in this class intermarry with the Arabs of Mesopotamia. However, their own women are strikingly beautiful, and are allowed great freedom and liberty. Many of the women can ride and shoot as well as the men, but undertake no manual labour beyond making butter and performing ordinary household duties.

Class II.—The sedentary mountaineers are completely distinct in custom and dress from the Baban Kurds. They are extremely industrious agriculturists, and cultivate every available piece of ground in the vicinity of their villages, showing extraordinary capacity in diverting and damming streams, draining and ditching for the purpose of irrigating the terraced fields in the vicinity of their villages; these fields bear crops of barley, wheat, maize, rice, and excellent tobacco.

They live under the rule of tribal Chiefs, and are, like the Baba Kurds, constantly at war with one another. The men carry rifles and daggers, and are active fighters and hunters. Each village has in its centre, or near it, a small double bastioned block-house or castle of hewn stone. In times of war the people take refuge in these buildings for purposes of defence. The intertribal battles are often extremely bloody, six or seven men killed out of a party of twenty not being uncommon.

As regards mode of life, these Kurds, though sedentary, dwell in bowers erected on the flat roofs of their houses in summer. Like the Baba Kurds, their women do not veil and are well treated. Some of the tribes in this category are of opinion that they were converted from Christianity, but most of them have pagan traditions.

Among them dwell a good many Jewish families who are never maltreated, but are not permitted to carry arms or engage in tribal feuds; consequently the Jews travel on trading expeditions from tribe to tribe, whether the latter are friends or enemies.

Nestorian Christians dwelling amongst these tribes are occasionally living in a condition of vassalage, but, as often as not, share and own lands on an equal footing with the Moslem tribesmen.

Class III.—The remainder of the Kurds in Section A are semi-nomadic mountaineers, being partly agriculturists, partly shepherds, and partly horse-dealers. In dress they resemble Class II rather than Class I; they are of a thievish disposition, bloodthirsty, cowardly, and often cruel. Their women are ugly and hard worked; they usually ride donkeys or mules, and are extremely erratic in their movements. They generally differ in appearance from Kurds of Classes I and II, being big-boned heavily built men of a very dark complexion. No one who saw them could imagine they were of the same origin. In their wanderings they frequently dispense with tents, and shelter behind bales or reed screens.

As a rule, these semi-nomads are badly armed, poor in goods, and of a cowardly nature. In religion they appear to have no fixed belief of any kind, and care very little for such matters, though they are counted as Moslems.

As regards No. 50, Section A, the Miran are an exception to the above description, and the reader must look under their number for details concerning them. I would also note that in the south, Irak, Wazna, and in the vicinity of Mossul, to be a nomad is considered noble, while in the mountains the word "kochar" or shepherd is synonymous with "savage," "ignorant," or "brutish."

1. Daudieh: 4,000 families. A warlike semi-nomadic tribe inhabiting the banks of the Lower Zab. Noted swimmers, poor horsemen, called Baban Kurds.

2. D'Sdie: 5,000 families. A large tribe, partly composed of nomads, and partly agriculturists. They intermarry freely with the Gibbur Arab women. This tribe has lost much of its wealth owing to locusts and drought. Their women are exceedingly handsome and wear a peculiar and distinctive dress, *i.e.*, blue turbans like the men, and dark heavy garments, no colour or ornaments of any kind being worn. The men are good horsemen and agriculturists, the head-quarters of the tribe is on the Sultan's farm in the Kara Chok Dagh. These are called Baban Kurds.

3. Shaykh Bezeini: 4,000 families. A great and warlike tribe, turbulent and fierce. Noted robbers. Great horsemen. Very intelligent; make Martini-Henry rifles. Live in villages in winter, dwell in tents in the vicinity of their villages in spring. After the harvest proceed (June) to Persian frontier with their flocks. Return in September, or later if the season is hot. Dress in Persian fashion. Baban Kurds.

4. Shaykhan; 500 families. Completely nomadic, wealthy shepherds, pasture flocks between Tigris and both Zabs. Avow no connection with Yezidis, and often camp with the Tai Arabs, with whom, however, they do not intermarry. Baban Kurds.

5. Shabak: 500 families. Sedentary, said to be Shias by some, others affirm them to have a secret religion, others that they are Babis, others that they acknowledge a prophet, named Baba.

6. Mamund: ? families. I know nothing of this tribe, but I expect they are really a sub-tribe of the Hamawand No. 2, Section A.

7. Girdi: 6,000 families. A powerful tribe of shepherds, agriculturists and warriors, occasionally robbers. Dress in Persian fashion, very wealthy and good horsemen. They employ the Khoshnao, No. 21, Section A, to do agricultural work for them. They proceed to the Wazna district in summer to pasture their flocks. One section of this tribe dwelling at Ushkafsakka is well disposed to strangers, another living about four hours west of Ain Kawa, noted highwaymen. Baban Kurds.

7 A. Girdi: 1,200 families. These Girdi migrated from the vicinity of Girdmamik about sixty years ago, they have abandoned the use of tents in the summer and are now not to be distinguished from the surrounding mountaineers. They are industrious and wealthy. They still correspond with the mother tribe and send presents to the Chief at Ushkafsakka each spring. Baban Kurds.

8. Khalkani: 700 families. Semi-nomadic, but unwarlike. Baban Kurds.

9. Surchi: 3,000 families. 1,000 of the households are complete nomads. The Surchi have no peculiarities. Baban Kurds. A small tribe of Mamakanli, see Section D, Nos. 8 G and 9 A, are attached to the Surchi; evidently they had migrated southward at some time and have become absorbed, see Section A, No. 26.

10. Bejwan: 800 families. Speak a mixed language, apparently half Arabic, half Kurd; said by neighbours to be of Turkish origin and to be followers of Hajji Bektash.

11. Hamawand: 1,200 families. The most valiant, courageous, and intelligent of the Baban Kurd tribes. Splendid horsemen, crack shots, capable smiths, bold robbers, good agriculturists, such as enter the Government service prove capable officials. In 1878, 400 Hamawand horsemen armed only with lances penetrated far into the Caucasus, and brought back immense spoils. The Turkish Government has of late years done much to suppressing this tribe's power, but the men are still famous for their prowess and intelligence, and women for their beauty. The Hamawand intermarry freely with the Arabs, and reckon themselves of Arabian origin. Most Hamawand speak Arabic, their language is, however, Kurdish. Dress partly Arab, partly Persian. Formerly, they were noted lancers, however, they now only carry a modern rifle and dagger.

12. Jaff: 10,000 families. A great semi-nomadic tribe, as famous as the Hamawand; Saladin was supposed to have been of this tribe; they inhabit both sides of the frontier. The Jaff leaders are noted for not betraying one another as do other Kurdish Chiefs, hence their numbers and independence. They are supposed to dislike Europeans. Baban Kurds.

13. Guran: ? families. Baban Kurds.

14. Nuredi: ? families. I have been able to obtain no particulars concerning this tribe. Baban Kurds.

15. Piran: 900 families. Similar in customs to No. 3, Section A, said to be a sub-tribe of the Hartushi, No. 76, Section A. However, as I am not certain on this point, I have marked them as a separate tribe.

16. Alan: ? families. This name recurs in a sub-tribe of the Hartushi (see No. 76 E, Section A). I could find no connection; we see a tribe in Section C, No. 15 M, are called Alian. Baban Kurds.

17. Baki Khassa: ? families. Baban Kurds.

18. Kialoner: ? families. Baban Kurds.

19. Ghowruk: ? families. Baban Kurds.

20. Malkari: ? families. Baban Kurds.

21. Khoshnao: 2,000 families. Completely sedentary. Work for Girdi and Shaykh Bezeini Nos. 7 and 3, and occasionally look after crops of latter tribes during season of absence. Reputed to be poor fighters. Following account of origin was given me by Chief Agha of the tribe: Ambesbudast was the son of Saranduz, and Saranduz was the Wazir of Sultan Selim. The son of Imam Hussein gave the forefathers of Ambesbudast a seal-ring and lordship over all the lands between Kermanshah and Mosul, Ambesbudast was the forefather of the Khosnao. The two saints of the tribe are Hanifa and Mazdak.

22. Bilbas: 400 families. Frontier tribe. Baban Kurds. Semi-nomadic. Spend the summer at Wazna.

23. Aeu: 500 families. Semi-nomadic; same as No. 3, Section A. Live in town of Rania. Great warriors and good horsemen. Spend summer at Wazna.

24. Mamash: 2,000 families. Complete nomads. Baban Kurds. Spend summer at Wazna.

25. Mengor: 2,000 families. A warlike tribe; semi-nomadic. Spend summer at Wazna.

26. Mamakan: ? families. This tribe now counts as a sub-tribe of the Surchi, No. 9, Section A. The name Mamakan, or variations of it, reappear in Section C, No. 15E, Del Mamikan, and in Section D, No. 8 G, Mamagan; a sub-tribe of the No. 8 Jibranli and No. 9 A Mamakanli, a sub-tribe of No. 9 Sipikanli. Armenian priests and the tribesmen of No. 9 A state that the Mamakanli were Armenians who became Moslems. Probably they were a Christian tribe of nomads and have been completely scattered. The Mamakan, the Mamagan, and the Del Mamakan have no tradition that I know of.

27. Baliki: ? families. A frontier tribe, of which I know nothing more than that it exists; however, it may be in some way connected with the Bellikan (No. 81, Section D), and with No. 15, Section E, Bellikanli. However, as the Bellikan No. 81 are Zago's, it seems to me improbable.

28. Pirastini: 1,100 families. Baban Kurds. Village dwellers; similar to the Khosnao, No. 21, Section A.

29. Zemzan: ? families.

30. Badeli: ? families. This is the name of a small sedentary tribe of Sunni Kurds living at Rowanduz; they acknowledge no connection with the Badeli, No. 1 D, Section E.

31. Shirwan: 1,800 families. Sedentary. Their name is taken from the locality in which they live. Industrious, hospitable, but warlike.

32. Herki: 3,000 families. A great nomadic tribe, much scattered; some are to be found near Erzeroum, others near Van, and great numbers near Mosul. Herki The are a very dark-skinned people; their neighbours say they are not Kurds at all, but some savage race. The Herki women are very bold and manly. The Herki sleep out in autumn without any tents. Take them as a whole, they are a low, dirty tribe, owning large flocks of sheep and dealing in inferior pack-horses. It is impossible to mark them down with any accuracy, as they seem to have no fixed beats. They generally camp in small numbers and move about in little detachments. Their divisions are as follows:—

Mendan: We see the name again as a sub-tribe of the Milli in North Mesopotamia (see Section C, No. 1 G).

Zerhati: Sub-tribe of Herki. Roves about in the vicinity of Van.

Zeydan: Sub-tribe of Herki. See this name appears again as a sub-tribe of the great Pinianishli (No. 73, Section A), and once again as a sub-tribe of Motikan (Section B, No. 20 E).

Haji: 200 families. Sub-tribe of Herki. This is the sedentary section of the Herki, and lives in the centre of the place marked with the No. 32.

33. Baradost: 1,500 families. Tribe taking its name from Baradost River.

33 A. Baradost: 650 families. Tribe taking its name from Baradost River.

34. Berzan: 750 families. Taking tribal name from district of Berzan. This tribe is famous for its fighting qualities and a certain holy family known as that of the Shaykhs of Berzan.

35. Nirva: 800 families. Completely sedentary.

36. Reikan: 800 families. Sedentary.

37. Zebar: 1,000 families. This is a district containing about thirty villages, inhabited almost entirely by sedentary Kurds, who are called Zebar Kurds. They are careful farmers, good vine growers, good builders, hospitable to strangers, but incredibly quarrelsome among themselves. Their Chiefs build small castles, in which they are generally being besieged, unless they are besieging some one else. These Kurds are usually plucky fighters on their own ground. They have a chronic feud with the Shaykhs of Berzan (see No. 34, Section A).

38. Ashaghi: I can give no particulars of this tribe.

39. Hasseina: ? families. A small broken tribe of nomads and villagers near Mosul.

40. Misuri: 120 families. A poor sedentary tribe.

41. Doshki: 500 families. At Denok, this section has a bad name for thieving and brigandage. Kermanji, evidently an offshoot of No. 41 A, Section A.

41 A. Doshki: 2,000 families. Industrious agriculturists at Geaver (Giaver).

42. Jellali: 4,000 families. Both sedentary and nomadic, near Amadia, we find the name reappear in Section B, No. 14; the latter is evidently a migration from Amadia. However, as to whether this Jellali is the mother tribe of the Jellikanli, No. 12, Section E, is by no means certain.

43. Dore: 800 families.

44. Berwari: 600 families. Sedentary.

45. Kohan: 70 families. Nomads, probably a sub-tribe, but of which I know not.

46. Shaykhan: ? families. Semi-nomadic. This tribe dwells near Shaykh Adi, the religious centre of the Yezidis, and the dwelling-place of the religious Head of the sect; there is also a temporal Chief who used to live there, but I understand that he now keeps his whereabouts a secret. The tribe takes its name from Sheikh Adi; there is nothing to show that it has any connection other than religious with the Yezidis of the Sinjar (see Section C, No. 16).

47. Reshkan: ? families. There are said to be some Yezidis in this tribe.

48. Haweri: 300 families. Devil worshippers, these live near Zakho; I suspect some connection with the Haverka (Section C, No. 151).

49. Spirti: 70 families. Nomads. The name was given me while passing their tents; I had not, however, time to investigate.

50. Miran: 1,000 families. Low tribe of shepherds, migrating from Jeziret-ibn-Omar to Lake Van in spring and returning in autumn; this tribe has an atrocious reputation for all kinds of villany; curiously enough they are usually very friendly to Christians and Europeans, but treat Moslems in a scandalous fashion. They move up to within about 15 miles of Lake Van annually, passing Shernakh on their way; they have a chronic feud with the Shernakhli tribe (Section A, No. 53 A).

51. Hasseina: 500 families. I cannot connect this with Hasseina (No. 39, Section A).

52. Sindi: Total number of families, 1,500. A mixed tribe of Moslems and Nestorians, latter in a minority. Sedentary. Two sub-tribes: A, Slope; B, Guli.

53. Goyan: 1,400 families. A large and powerful tribe of sedentary and semi-nomadic Kurds. They have, I expect, several subdivisions, but I have been unable to obtain their names. This branch contains a certain number of Zazas, for particulars of whom see Section B. The Goyan is noted for independence and valour; they slew Mustapha Pasha, the great Chief of the Miran, in a pitched battle in 1809.

53 A. Spernakhli: 600 families. Name given to a sedentary section of the Goyan living at Shernakh.

54. Dakhori: ? families. A few sedentary Kurds in the vicinity of Shernakh; probably a section of the Goyan.

55. Shiriki: 200 families. Wealthy, sedentary tribe; name suggests connection with the Zirikanli (No. 10, Section D).

56. Balian: 70 families. Semi-nomadic, poor, and scattered, similar to the Herki (No. 32, Section 4).

57. Eiru: 100 families.

58. Atmanikan: 5,000 families. Very wealthy nomads, may be often seen in the Bitlis Pass and near Bohtan, where their head-quarters are. They dress like the Herki (No. 32, Section A), but have not the bad reputation of the latter. They have hardly any horses. In summer they migrate up to the Mush Plain.

59. Silukan: 900 families. Cultivators and nomads. Similar to No. 58, Section A; also migrate in summer to the Mush Plain.

60. Kichian: 150 families. Nomads.

61. Duderi: 400 families. Nomads in summer on the south shore of Lake Van.

62. Alikanli: 150 families. Nomads. Very insignificant, probably a sub-tribe, but could not discover whose.

63. Halaji: 900 families. Mixed sedentary Kurds, Turks, and Armenians, dwelling on the shores of Lake Van.

64. Tiyan: 300 families. This tribe has a bad name. It is said by some to be an isolated fragment of the great Arab tribe of Tai, but I do not know if there are any grounds for believing this.

65. Hawatan: 300 families. Sedentary in the Bohtan district.

66. Keka: ? families. Near Jalamerik.

67. Bellicar: 180 families. A small tribe of semi-nomadic Kurds, no connection with Belliki or Bellikanli. State that they were converted from heathenism by Khaled-ibn-Waled.

68. Khani: 180 families. Sedentary near Khoshab.

69. Takuli: 450 families. Perhaps a sub-tribe of the Zilanli; the Takuli think they came from Erzeroum about 100 years ago. They are now sedentary, very poor physique, and appear to be of the same low race north of Lake Van mentioned in introduction of Section D.

70. : ? families. Owing to an accident the name of the tribe has here been lost. I leave the number blank in hopes of some day rediscovering the right name.

71. Shekak: Total number of families, 6,000. A notable tribe; they are called Revand by the local Armenians, they only spend three months in tents, and therefore may be called sedentary. The following sub-tribes are, I think, only an ancient political confederation, and not attached by ties of blood:—

71 A. Shekifti: 1,200 families. Sub-tribe of Shekak, completely sedentary.

71 B. Mukeri: 1,200 families. Sub-tribe of Shekak, completely sedentary; said to have migrated from Persia fifty years ago; split in two portions, one at Nourdous, and one at Khoshab.

71 C. Sheveli: ? families. Sub-tribe of Shekak. This tribe crops up again near Iskilip. I presume a forcible migration in Selim's time.

71 D. Butan: ? families. Sub-tribe of Shekak.

71 E. Sheveli: ? families. Sub-tribe of Shekak.

71 F. Shekak: 1,000 families. A southern branch of the Shekak; complete nomads.

72. Zerzan: 100 families.

73. Pinianishli: 1,200 families. A large tribe and head of a confederation, of which the following are the chief branches. It is impossible to locate them more precisely than by saying they inhabit the country in the vicinity of the No. 73, Section A. The following are the names of the affiliated tribes:—

Zeydan: There are some Zeydan in Modeki, No. 20 E, Section B, and, as we have seen, a sub-tribe of the Herki, No. 32 C, Section A.

Barkoshan: ? families.

Kinarberosh.

Suratawan.

Billijan.

Jelli: ? families. Sub-tribe of No. 73. I suggest the mother tribe of No. 12, Section E.

Gewiji: ? families. Sub-tribe of No. 73. I suggest the mother tribe of No. 12, Section E.

Shevilan: Obviously a fragment of No. 71 C and 71 E, Section A.

Musanan: For remarks see Section B, No. 12.

73 A. Little Pinianishli: 500 families. Apparently an off-shoot of No. 73. There is supposed to be something disgraceful about this tribe, what I do not know; thirteen of its families are Yezidis, others Christians.

74. Givran: ? families. This is the name of a small tribe in the district of Giaver. Local authorities state that the name merely indicates Giaver-an, *i.e.*, Giaver people, in which case it may have no connection with No. 8, Section C, and No. 31 L, Section B.

75. Shemsiki: 900 families. An interesting tribe, once nomadic, now sedentary. The Chiefs consider themselves of Arab stock, and look on the common tribesmen as of low race. The tribesmen are very ugly as a rule, the Chiefs refined and handsome.

76. Hartushi: This is a very important Kurdish tribe, and I suggest that investigation may some day show that it is the connecting link between the Kurds of Irak and the Kurds of Armenia.

The nomadic branches of this tribe have a very bad reputation, although richer than the Herki No. 32, Section A, they resemble them in mode of life and general appearance.

76 A. Ezdinan: ? families. Sub-tribe said to be Yezidis. There is no mistake about the name.

76 B. Merzigi: 900 families. Sub-tribe of No. 76. Sedentary. Near Bashkala.

76 C. Mamresh: 200 families. Yezidi religion, but belong to Hartushi tribe.

76 D. Mamed: 200 families. I believe this sub-tribe of the Hartushi to be sedentary.

76 E. Alan: ? families. Sub-tribe of Hartushi.

76 F. Beroz: 60 families. Sub-tribe of Hartushi. Famous as cultivators of tobacco.

76 G. Jiriki: ? families. Sub-tribe of Hartushi.

76 H. Shidan: ? families. Sub-tribe of Hartushi.

76 J. Mamkhor: 400 families. Sub-tribe of Hartushi. Very warlike nomads.

76 K. Khawistan: ? families. Sub-tribe of Hartushi.

76 L. Sharafan: 3,000 families. Sub-tribe of Hartushi. The largest branch of the Hartushi nomads; descend south of Akra in spring.

76 M. Mamadan: 200 families. Sub-tribe of Hartushi. I think sedentary; some occasionally descend to the Beykhey Dagh, near Zakho.

76 N. Gavdan: 300 families. Sub-tribe of Hartushi. Nomads; very bad reputation as thieves; inhospitable and savage; wealthy horse breeders. Camp in spring near Zakho.

76 O. Zedek. Sub-tribe of Hartushi. Nomads.

76 P. Zefki: 150 families. Sub-tribe of Hartushi. Nomads; shepherds.

76 Q. Hajjan: 500 families. Sub-tribe of Hartushi. Nomads.

Section B.

The tribes inhabiting this zone are completely cut off from the others mentioned in the catalogue, and have little or nothing in common with them. The barriers which divide this region from the Zones A, C, D, and E may be enumerated as follows:—

1. The great Bitlis Gorge, which can only be approached from either extremity, and forms a kind of natural dyke between Zones B and A.
2. The Tigris, which is usually unfordable and practically interrupts all communication with C.
3. The huge spurs of the Eastern Taurus range, which act as a protecting wall against D.
4. The Upper Euphrates, which separates the Dersim Mountains from the overlapping portions of Zone E.

From the point of view of a casual observer I should be inclined to group the Kurdish tribes in this zone into five classes:—

Class I would include Nos. 1 to 10, 27, and 29.
Class II.—No. 20 and its appendant letters.
Class III.—Nos. 12 to 19.
Class IV.—No. 23.
Class V.—No. 31 and its appendant letters.

As regards Class I, they appear to be semi-nomadic and sedentary tribes who have at some period migrated viâ the Bitlis Pass into the undulating arable-pasture land between Diarbekir and the Bitlis Su. These people may quite possibly be a part of that multitude of tribes who lived in a state of vassalage to the ancient Kings of Armenia; the names Bekran (No. 6) and Musik (No. 1), both well known in the old histories, give colour to this idea. At any rate, these tribes of the southern plains own no connection with any of the tribes mentioned in the other classes.

As to the habits and dress of this class I can give very few details, as on each occasion that I passed through their country I was unable to make any study of them with the exception of the Tirikan (No. 9). The men appear to be tall and well built, fairly industrious, but not very hospitable.

Classes II, III, IV, and V are dealt with in the catalogue as classes *en bloc*, and need no further comment.

1. Musik: ? families. This tribe has been mentioned by previous travellers, but I could obtain no account of it. I do not omit it, because the Chaldean historian, Toma of Merdis, makes mention of the name. There is, however, a village in Motikan called Mosik. None of the Motikan Kurds, however, make use of the name as a tribal designation.

2. Penjinan: 500 families. A tribe noted for its fighting qualities. There are said to be some Yezidis families among them.

3. Keskoli: ? families. I am doubtful as to this tribe's existence; it is probably a local name for a division of the Penjinan.

4. Pouran: 200 families. Semi-nomads; pastoral and agriculturists.

5. Shaykhdodanli: 200 families. I do not know if this tribe is sedentary or nomadic. There are a great number of non-tribal Kurds in this neighbourhood. A further difficulty lies in the fact that the Kurds of this region are averse to making known their tribal names or customs. Resemblance to the Duderi and Dudikanli should be noted.

6. Bekran: 500 families. Nomads; winter near Diarbekir and summer near Sairt. Tradition states that they are the descendants of the Bagrations; the Armenian clergy generally speak with some certainty on this point. We see the name Bekiran (No. 16H, Section C) among the Yezidis of the Sinjar. The Yezidis of the Sinjar believe that they came from a country north of the Tigris.

7. Reshkotanli: 500 families. Nomads. The Rushdunians are often mentioned in the history of Chamich.

8. Besheri: ? families. A sedentary tribe between Sairt, Meyoparkin, and Diarbekir.

9. Tirikan: 650 families. A sedentary tribe between the Euphrates and Haini. Fond of bright-coloured clothes; wealthy and intelligent; kindly disposed to the few Armenians who live among them. The local Armenians state that they are of common origin, and that they (the Armenians) are not of Armenian race. This idea is naturally discouraged by the Armenian clergy and laity of Diarbekir, but I have it on the authority of a priest and Christian Headman of the district.

10. Kuzlichan: ? families. This is a small tribe located as on map, the name is that of a district in the Dersim Mountains about 80 miles north. I think we may infer a southerly migration from that region.

11. Zekeri: ? families.

12. Musi: ? families.

13. Sarmi: 400 families.

14. Jelali: 100 families.

15. Khazali: 50 families.

16. Bederi: ? families.

17. Malashigo: ? families.

18. Bosikan: 180 families.

19. Kurian: 180 families.

The Bosikan and Kurian, Nos. 18 and 19, and the sub-tribe of the Bosikan, No. 15, inhabit the district between Mush and Kabeljôus. Their tradition is that they used to worship a sword thrust in the ground and the moon and stars, and that they lived under the government of a Christian King, named Tavit, who dwelt in the Castle of Boso. That presently there came a certain Sheikh Nasredin, from the Khalif at Bagdad, that he slew King Tavit, and enlightened them in the truths of Islam; the Emirs of Nasredin were Musa, Saru, and Zakharia, and these brought with them their henchmen, who formed the tribes of Zekeri, No. 11, Musi, No. 12, Sarmi, No. 13. After this other tribes, namely, Malashigo, No. 17, Bederi, No. 16, and Jelali, No. 14, followed in the wake of the first, and helped to drive the Bosikan and Kurian into the northern mountains. All these tribes have Armenians attached, and those with the Bosikan and Kurian are said to be the descendant followers of King Tavit. None of the Armenians in this district bear any resemblance to those of the Mush Plain or the villagers near Van. They are not to be distinguished from the Bosikan and Kurian Kurds in dress or appearance. The Malashigo, and tribes Nos. 11, 12, 13, 14, and 16, call themselves Arabs, and, besides talking Kermanji and Armenian, also talk among themselves a peculiar bastard Arabic which is just comprehensible, but almost as different from ordinary Arabic as is Italian from French. It is far more difficult to understand than the Arabic spoken at Sairt. At Tillu, a large village in the vicinity of Sairt, resides at present a certain Sheikh Nasredin, previously mentioned. I met one of his nephews, who told me that the family had a document giving them Tillu and certain lands. This paper was signed by Sultan Selim, the conqueror of Persia. The family consider themselves to be of Abbasid stock, and although few of them ever leave Kurdistan, they make it a point to talk good Arabic among themselves. Sheikh Nasredin's nephew, who appeared a very well-read man, told me he thought that the tribes Nos. 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, and 17 were not really of Arabian origin, but that they had accepted Islam, and changed their tribal names for those of their conqueror's, whose language they adopted and then corrupted.

20. Modeki (Motikan). This is the name of a peculiar and inaccessible mountain region north of Bitlis, and incidentally the appellation of all Kurds who dwell within it. I endeavoured to effect an entrance but was unable to do so; any one wishing to explore this district must do so on foot; the tribes inhabiting it are apparently mostly Zazas.

They are extremely wild and shy, and difficult to talk to. Other Kurds who had been into the Motikan district supplied me with the following particulars:—

20 A. Keyburan: Zaza Kurds.

20 B. Bubanli: Ditto.

20 C. Kusan: Ditto.

20 D. Rutchaba: Ditto.

20 E. Zeidan: Kermanji Kurds.

20 F. Erikli: Ditto (sometimes called "Khiarta").

20 G. Pir Musi: Ditto.

By all accounts the Bubanli are the most ancient tribe in Modeki; the Zeydan, as we have seen in Nos. 32, Section A, and 73, Section A, are split as sub-tribes elsewhere. If the story that the Kermanjis of Motikan are slaves to the Zazas be true, there would be some ground for supposing that the former entered as refugees, particularly as the extremely difficult nature of the ground forbids the idea of its being conquered by anything but a regular army. Apparently the Zazas of Motikan are neither Moslems nor Christians. I would suggest that a thorough exploration of this district would prove very interesting, and might throw a wonderful light on the history of Armenia, if a good collection of folk songs and legends could be made.

21. Pinjari: 450 families. Sasun district: speak Kermanji.

22. Slivan: ? families. Probably Zazas.

23. Non-tribal Zazas: 1,000 families. In the locality where this number appears there are a quantity of non-tribal Zazas, their state is almost anarchial, and they seem although not naturally cruel or vicious, to have hardly any regard for human life; they frankly say that they are as beasts of the field and have hardly any religion. As an example of how unsophisticated these people are, I might cite the fact that such I have met as have served in the army have often become devout Moslems and look with shame on their previous state. Tribal organization they appear to have no idea of. They speak the Zaza language, and seem very poor farmers.

The Zazas are small, impish people, with shrill voices, and are extremely shy of strangers. I should imagine that they are the remains of a primitive mountain race, similar to the Bitlis.

The only instance of Zazas living on the plains or in the open country is at Suverek, where a few live with the Karagetch.

24. Kedak: 600 families. Zazas due south of Palu on the Veshin Dagh.

25. Ashmishart: 500 families. Zazas. Shia sect.

26. Kulbin: ? families. Zazas.

27. Gurus: ? families. Beyond the name I could obtain no particulars concerning this tribe. Ibrahim Pasha, however, knows the name.

28. Sinan: ? families. Zazas.

29. Elia: ? families. Nomads. Impossible to ascertain whether Zazas or Kermanji Kurds.

30. Behirmay: 500 families. Zazas. Shia sect.

31. Dersimli: General appellation of Kurds living in the Dersim, with the exception of No. 31 C, Section B, Shawak, all the Dersim tribes are apparently pagans, who call themselves Shias. Their religion, as far as I could ascertain, was a mixture of magic and nature worship, which, again, develops into Pantheism. As a man of this region said, "I do not worship God, for a part cannot worship the whole." However, they are Shia Moslems in outward form; swearing by Ali, and calling him the greatest of the prophets; this, I think, chiefly to annoy the Sunnis. The Dersimli are doubtless robbers and cut-throats, but I doubt their courage, since a very little show of authority suffices to keep them in their fastnesses, whither it is difficult to follow them. All round the foot of the Dersim there are tribes who live in a kind of feudal vassalage to Beys who talk Turkish and veil their women. At first I imagined these Beys were the descendants of Turkish military fiefs, of whom one is always hearing of and never meeting; as on former occasions, these "Turkish" Beys turn out to be the descendants of indigenous Chiefs, who have settled down and adopted Turkish customs. The Dersimli are small, wiry men with sharp features; they are intelligent and have a keenly developed artistic sense for colour and dress. There are, indeed, on the slopes of the Dersim, some Turks, but they are Ak Koyunlu, of Uzun Hassan, and live in a kind of commune of their own. (For history of latter see Deguigne's "Histoire des Huns.") As far as I could ascertain the Dersimli have a special dialect of their own, but it is closely allied to Zaza. Most of the Dersim tribes are regular migrants from south to north in late spring, their villages are left quite empty without caretakers.

31 A. Milan: This is the original mother tribe of the great Milli confederation in

North Mesopotamia, with whom they still keep up communication. For particulars of the legend and importance attached to the name Milli or Milan, see No. 1, Section C.

31 B. Kechel: 1,000 families. Near Palu.

31 C. Shawak: ? families. Sedentary. Lately converted to orthodox Sunnism.

31 D. Ferhad Ushaghi: ? families. In the vicinity of Surpignan. This is the only Kurdish tribal name beginning with F.

31 E. Bakhtiarli: ? families. Perhaps thirty villages near Chemishgezek. Semi-nomadic, or at least migratory; having two villages, one on the high land and one in the valley.

31 F. Karabanli: ? families. At Asunik.

31 G. Mirzanli: ? families. Exact location in Dersim unknown.

31 H. Abbasanli: ? families. Make splendid carpets of great intricacy of design and fineness in weaving.

31 I. Balshaghi: 2,000 families. Sedentary.

31 J. Latchin Ushaghi: ? families. At Amuga.

31 K. Kuzlichan: ? families. This is certainly not the name of a tribe, but of a Dersim district containing several tribes; however, the name crops up as that of a tribe north of Diarbekir; I presume a migration of some families from the Dersim.

31 L. Givran: ? families. Reported to be in Dersim, but I am doubtful.

Section C.

This zone is in reality the ancient province of the Northern Jazirah of the Empire of the Khalifs of Bagdad, the Kurds inhabiting it may be roughly classed as follows:—

Class I.—No. 1, and appendant letters. This class may be divided into two sub-sections: (1) No. 1 to No. 1 D*; (2) No. 1 E* to No. 1 R*.

Class II.—No. 15, and appendant letters.

Class III.—No. 16, and appendant letters.

Class IV.—The remaining numbers, with the exception of 18 and 19.

With regard to Class I, sub-section 1, they are evidently partly formed of a great migration from the Dersim district in the reign of Sultan Selim, but owing to inter-marriage for many generations with the Arab, Aramean, and Kurdish peoples of the district by absorbing many of the local tribes they have lost their original characteristics. They are poor cultivators, but good herdsmen and carpet weavers.

Their mode of life is simple: January, February, March, and April, they spend in the lower slopes of the Karaja Dagh; April and May on the plains of Mesopotamia; June, July, August, and September, sees them move up towards Diarbekir; in October, November, and December, they move once more southwards.

Sub-section 2: These tribes admit themselves of the same race and origin as Sub-section No. 1, but are cut off from it by the Euphrates River; these tribes are all Shias or Pagans of the Dersimli type; at certain seasons priests from the Dersim district visit them and hold religious services.

Their dress is similar to that of the Turkish-speaking people of Anatolia; however, their women veil before Moslems and Christians. The men are not very remarkable for any particular characteristic.

Class II.—It is very difficult to state with any preciseness whether the tribes included in this class can be termed Kurds proper or no. I presume that they represent scattered fragments of the old Aramean population, mixed with Imperial colonists of Roman times—Kurds, Persians, Turks, and Mongols.

Some tribes are wholly Moslems, others wholly Christian (Jacobite sect), others Devil worshippers, others contain adherents of all three religions. Taken as a whole, they are industrious and capable people, good stone-masons, and admirable vine-growers, but withal fierce, bloodthirsty, vindictive, revengeful, and treacherous. Peculiar religious movements are not uncommon amongst them, and the adoption of Evangelical Protestantism by a certain number has been productive of peculiar developments. For appearance and dress, see photos; note distinction.*

Class III.—The great Yezidi, or devil-worshipping community, and tribal confederation of the Sinjar, is entirely Kurdish.

In physique the Yezidis of the Sinjar resemble the Dersimli Kurds, being small-boned, wiry, lean, and hungry-looking men, with pinched features, small, hooked noses, pointed chins, broad, shallow lower jaws, high cheek bones, narrow, close-set black eyes,

* These are not reproduced.

and thin lips. They twist their hair in six or seven small braided plaits which hang down on either side of their faces.

The dress of the Sinjar tribes is unlike that of any other people, and I should imagine of remote antiquity. It consists of a pointed brown felt cap, a white shirt of cotton, cut square at the neck and with no opening in front, a cloak of gazelle skin or light-brown leather, raw hide sandals, and leather belt.

By their own tradition they migrated to the Sinjar after Timur's invasion. However, they admit that the Yezidi faith existed in the Sinjar Mountain long before that date.

Class IV.—These Kurds of North Mesopotamia are the off-scourings and riff-raff of all Kurdistan, rogues, thieves, vagabonds, and bullies almost to a man; they seem to have no single redeeming virtue, being idle, cowardly, and cruel. They have little pride of race and seemingly intermarry and mix with gipsies and other low nomad tribes. From this class, however, must be excepted No. 18, No 19, and No. 10, who have evidently migrated at some period from the plains north of Lake Van.

Note.—East of Urfa there is a large Settlement of gipsies, who will pretend they are Kurdish tribesmen; the traveller should be on his guard against the information they will give him. The word "Nowar," or the question, "Do you come from Howek," will invariably silence them, or make them admit their true origin.

1. Milli: 30 families. This name has a curious and peculiar mystery attached to it, which innumerable cross-examinations on my part of every kind of Kurd has failed to elucidate to my own satisfaction. Some people merely say that the Milli were a powerful tribe who were broken up by the Turks in the 18th century. The facts at present stand as follows:—Ibrahim Pasha is Chief of the Milli, and although his own tents do not amount to more than 30, he has complete jurisdiction over more than 2,000. Secondly, he is spoken of with great respect and reverence by the Kizilbash of Malatia, not because he is wealthy, but because he is the Head of the Milli. Thirdly, he is the only stranger who can travel through the Dersim without an escort. Fourthly, the Shemsiki, No. 75, Section A, look on him as their nominal Head. Fifthly, isolated villages in Anatolia and the Erzinjian district speak of him as their patriarchal Chief. Now this is all the more peculiar since in the Kurds enumerated there are Shias, Pagans, Pantheists, Zazas, and orthodox Moslems, of which latter he is himself; his influence is therefore neither political nor religious, and yet influence he has, for Kurds will come from miles around to ask his opinion on family quarrels, and generally take his verdict as final.

Again, there are certain tribes, which, although allied to him in war, have no regard for his patriarchal position. Ibrahim's own explanation is as follows:—Years and years ago the Kurds were divided into two branches, the Milan and Zilan; there were 1,200 tribes of the Milan, but God was displeased with them, and they were scattered in all directions, some vanished, others remained, such as remained respect me as the Head of the Milan.

Now, the tradition with Ibrahim is, that all this happened long before the days of Mahommed, thus some Milan are Christians, others Yezidis; the Milan tradition is that they are children of Shem, and came from Arabia, but that the Zilan are from the East. Now this vague legend is found almost in its entirety among the Kurds of the Dersim, save that there we have the following variation:—

The Milan came from Arabia and settled in the Dersim when Sultan Selim conquered West Kurdistan; his Vizier saw that the Kurds wandered up and down the Dersim slopes, and that the land was crowded with nomads; the Vizier ordered such as wished to cultivate, to build houses, and such as wished to remain in tents to go south. Some built houses, learned Turkish, and veiled their women, others fled to the Dersim fastnesses, and others went south. Among the latter the Chief family, of whom now Ibrahim Pasha is the Head.

Among other stories of the Milan is the one that the Zilan are a base and ignoble race, curiously enough, wherever one meets a tribe admittedly of Zilan origin (there are in Section D, Nos. 6, 9, 9 A, and 17), you find rough and barbarous people, with a peculiarly hideous cast of countenance. The legend to me is expremely interesting, but the way in which Milan Kurds would suddenly grow vague, or change the subject while relating fragments of it, was more than maddening. The reader would be surprised if he knew the months of toil I endured in collecting the above small paragraph.

All avowed Milan tribes are starred.

1A. Danan: 250 families. Nomads.

1B. Seidan: 450 families. Nomads. We have seen a similar name in Section A, Nos. 32 and 73, and Section B, No. 20 E, but on this occasion I suggest the name is derived from some leader, either a Sayad, or a man called Said.

1C. Kiran: 550 families. Nomads. Ibrahim Pasha suggests that these are of the same tribe as the Yezidi tribes. Of course these Kiran are orthodox Moslems.

1D. Dudikanli: ? families. Nomads. With Ibrahim in North Mesopotamia. There are five villages near Varto who speak Zaza, and there are said to be some in the Dersim, see Section B.

1E. Khalajan: 700 families. Nomads.

1F. Kelish: ? families. Nomads.

1G. Mendan: ? families. Nomads, a small sub-tribe of No. 1. Whether these have moved from the Herki No. 32, Section A, to the Karaja Dagh, or *vice versâ*, is difficult to say.

1H. Kumnaresh: 350 families. Nomads.

1I. Sherkian: 80 families. Nomads.

1J. El Kawat: ? families. Nomads.

1K. Dashi: ? families. Nomads.

1L. Meshkenli: ? families. Nomads.

1M. Kalendelan: ? families. Nomads reported in the Dersim, Section B.

1N. Haji Bairam: ? families. Nomads.

1O. Hassanekan: 260 families. Nomads. These have nothing to do with the Hassananli, who are avowedly Zilan.

1P. Khalajari: 700 families. Nomads.

1Q. Elia: ? families. Nomads.

1R. Isiadat: 85 families. Nomads.

1S. Terkan: 700 families. Nomads.

1T. Nasrian: 75 families. Nomads.

1U. Tchuvan: 210 families. Nomads.

1V. Sartan: 80 families. Nomads, near Ras-ul-Ain.

1W. Usbakhan: 70 families. Nomads.

1X. Matmieh: 800 families. Nomads.

1Y. Chemikan: 250 families. Nomads.

1Z. Barguhan: 130 families. Nomads.

1A°. Hisulieh: 550 families. Nomads.

1B°. Chiaresh: ? families. Nomads.

1C°. Zirofkan; 2,000 families. Semi-nomads of the Karaja Dagh.

1D°. Daghbashi: ? families. A large semi-nomadic tribe east of Suverek.

1E°. Bujuk: ? families. Nomads.

1F°. Hoshian: ? families. Nomads.

1G°. Beski: 800 families. Apparently sedentary. A curious legend of this tribe is that they are of English or Frank origin, and that their ancient name was Salargan. With reserve I suggest the name Lusignan, and as an explanation that some member of that house once had dealings with the tribe, or took refuge in its tents.

1H°. Haji Mauli: 500 families. Nomads. No horses, travel small stages with donkeys.

1I°. Kassiani: 500 families. Sedentary.

1J°. Chakali: 1,000 families. Nomads.

1K°. Merdis: 1,000 families. Sedentary, I think.

1L°. Entergetch: ? families. Nomads.

1M°. Janbeg: ? families. Sedentary. Obviously the remains of No. 18, Section F.

1N°. Boyleyan Porga: 500 families. Sedentary.

1O°. Derejan: 800 families. Nomads.

1P°. Kao: 5,000 families. Nomad and sedentary.

1Q°. Mulikan: 500 families. I do not know if nomad or sedentary.

1R°. Derejan: ? families. Possibly a separate branch of No. 1O°, Section C, or, perhaps, only the summer quarters of that tribe.

2. Karagetch: 1,700 families. This is the name of a low tribe of semi-nomads dwelling near Suverek, brutal, savage, and indescribably filthy. This tribe has a bad name in every respect, and being on a high road gets a bad name for Kurds from many travellers. Curiously enough many of the Karagetch speak Zaza, but between Diarbekir and the Tur Abdin there is a vast quantity of nameless non-tribal Kurds, who apparently are outcasts from their own clans, the worst of these "undesirables" seem to attach themselves to the Karagetch.

3. Non-tribal Zazas: For an account see No. 23, Section B.

4. Chaikessen: ? families.

5. Barhan: ? families.

6. Hasseran: ? families.

7. Abu Tahir: ? families. These are said to be of Arab origin, but talk Kermanji.

8. Givran: ? families. Sub-tribe of No. 1, Section C, accidently left out of the letters.

9. Edmerzan: ? families. This is a doubtful tribe.

10. Chichichiek (Kiki, Kikie); 1,200 families. This is a large tribe of semi-nomadic Kurds, now inhabiting the slopes of the Karaja Dagh in winter (in villages) and descending in the Jagh-Jagh River in spring and early summer. Their Chiefs state that they are the descendants of an Emir sent to rule the Diar Erabieh by the Abbasid Khalifs. When the Khalifate grew weak this family remained and was taken by the Kikieh Kurds as a ruling family. The local Bedawin look on this family of Chiefs as men of good blood. The Chiefs have a notable contempt for their tribesmen who they talk of as "Kurdish dogs;" and I believe will not marry their women. The Chief Agha of the Kikieh, Abdur Rahman is a well-read man, and has done a certain amount of work with a view to locating the ancient cities on the banks of the Khabur; he has read a certain amount of history, and states that the Kikieh were one of the last remnants of the sedentary population of the Jazirah, that they were driven north by the Shammar, and only come south with the object of showing their rights of settlement in event of further re-establishment of agriculture in the North Jazirah.

11. Dakhori: ? families. A small migration from Shernakh.

12. Bunesi: ? families. I think this tribe does not exist, but as travellers have reported it I give the name.

13. Mirsinan: ? families. No particulars obtainable.

14. Surkishli: 900 families. Sedentary. This tribe is said to speak the dialect of Baban Kurds; if so, perhaps, connected with Surchi No. 9, Section A.

15. Under this number I have grouped the Moslem, Yezidi, and Christian tribes of the Tur Abdin.

15A. Mizizakh: 390 families. Tur Abdin. Moslem. Kurds.

15B Saur: ? families. Tribe of the Tur Abdin mixed Christians and Moslems, speak Arabic.

15C. Mahalemi; 800 families. This tribe has a peculiar history. They state that 350 years ago they were Christians; during a famine of corn they asked the Patriarch permission to eat meat during Lent, the Patriarch refused and they became Moslems. They speak a bastard Arabic, and the women wear red clothes, and do not veil. Ibrahim Pasha says they are now a mixed race of Arabs and Kurds, some families are still supposed to be Christians.

15D. Haruna; 750 families. Sedentary Kurds, ninety of the families are Jacobite Christians.

15E. Del Mamikan: ? families. A tribe of the Tur Abdin, speak bastard Arabic.

15F. Domana: 180 families. Tribe of the Tur Abdin, Christians and Moslems.

15G. Dorkan: 120 families. Tribe of the Tur Abdin Mountain composed of Yezidis and Moslems.

15H. Moman: 600 families. Moslems speak Kermanji, ninety families are Christians, also three of the tribal leaders.

15I. Haverka: 1,800 families. Half Christian, half Moslem speak Kermanji. I suspect some connection with the Haweri Yezidis No. 48, Section A.

15J. Salahan. ? families.

15K. Girgiri. 500 families. Tent-dwelling agriculturists, talk Kermanji, but said to be of Arabian origin.

15L. Dasikan. 900 families. Yezidis Moslems and Christians, speak Kermanji. Tur Abdin.

15M. Alian. 1,200 families. Christians, Moslems, and Yezidis, language I think Kermanji.

15N. Mizidagh. ? families. See No. 15A, I suspect these to be a small nomadic section of No. 15A who live close at hand.

16. Yezidis of the Sinjar.

16A. Bumteywit. ? families. A tribe of Arabs living in a state of serfdom to the Yezidis of the Sinjar.

16B. Mirkan. ? families. Sedentary.

16C. Samuga. ? families. Dwell in tents near the Sinjar, I suspect the name of this tribe is derived from the locality in which they live.

16D. Beit-el-Khulta. ? families. Sedentary.

16 E. Hababa. ? families. Sedentary.

16 F. Kiran. ? families. Tent dwellers in Sinjar, there are some other Moslem Kiran which have been noted (see No. 1, Section C).

16 G. Beled. ? families. Sedentary Yezidis dwelling near the town of Beled Sinjar, and go by this name.

16 H. Bekiran. ? families. Sedentary, perhaps a section of the Bekiran near Diarbekir.

16 I. Mendikan. 300 families. A tribe of nomadic Yezidis between Tell Afar and Beled, a certain number of the Mendikan are Moslems, and do not intermarry with the Yezidis. I could not ascertain whether they were Arabs who had attached themselves to the Mendikan or not. At any rate, on all matters of business they are on good terms with their devil-worshipping fellow tribesmen. I may note that Father Chamich's "History of Armenia" makes frequent mention of the Mandukanians.

17. Alush. 200 families. A tribe of outcasts and refugees under a Kurd Chief, language Arabic.

18. Dinar or Dinardich. 1,000 families. A large North Mesopotamian tribe. Nomads and sedentary. Wealthy and industrious, resemble Barajich.

19. Berazich. 9,000 families. A branch of the Berizanli, No. 6 A, Section D, who have migrated at an unknown period to Seruj in North Mesopotamia. They are now partly "Arabised," and many wear Arab dress and have adopted Arab speech, they are partly complete nomads, partly completely sedentary, and partly semi-nomadic. They have rather a bad reputation for freebooting, but are industrious and intelligent.

Section D.

The tribes inhabiting this zone are extremely complicated in organization, and very difficult to order and catalogue. As far as I can see they seem to fall into three classes.

Class I. Nos. 6, 6A, 8, 9 to 13, 17, 23, 24.—These tribes are of a distinct and distinguishable race, of tall heavily-built men of surpassing ugliness of face and peculiar uncouthness of behaviour. Many travellers have generalized from them, and imagine all Kurds to resemble them.

They are seemingly true nomads by instinct, and lack capacity of any kind for either war or agriculture, they appear at once stupid and treacherous, disloyal, rapacious, and quarrelsome. However, they must have some qualities which are not apparent, since they appear to have generally been the masters of the country which they inhabit. Their traditions state that they originally came from Diarbekir, and were at one time either Armenian Christians or worshippers of fire. In many cases they have affiliated local tribes to themselves, notably the Jibranli (No. 8). But the affiliated tribesmen, such as the Bellikan No. 81, are very easy to distinguish by physiognomy alone. A peculiar custom subsists among them, as their women shave the hair of the scalp in a tonsure-like form. They are all orthodox Sunnis.

Class II, in whom I would include Nos. 8 A, 8 B, 8 C, 8 D, 8 E, 8 F, 8 G, 8 H, 8 I, 9A, 18, 19.—These tribes I am inclined to look on as the original shepherd tribes of the region, who inhabited it before Class I entered the district; they are usually small, fine featured, inoffensive people, with no very salient characteristics.

The Mamakanli are the most interesting in this division (for details see catalogue).

Class III.—I would suggest that Nos. 7, 16, and 16 A, are bodies of exiles sent from their native places by Sultan Selim, the conqueror of Erzeroum.

Class IV.—The remainder of the tribes in this region I can give no details.

1. Penjinan: Nomads. Summer quarters, a few villages in the vicinity. Call themselves Penjinan (No. 2, Section B).

2. Silukan: Summer quarters of Silukan.

3. Chukurli: ? families.

4. Azli: ? families.

5. Lolanli: 480 families. Shia sect.

6. Hassunanli: 3,300 families. A large tribe owning 110 villages in the districts of Hinus, Melasgird, and Warto. Some of the members of this tribe are semi-nomadic, but have been gradually abandoning their tents of late.

6 A. Berizanli: 900 families. This is a sub-tribe of the Hassananli. All are now sedentary. Probably the mother-tribe of No. 19, Section C.

7. Isoli: ? families. Some near Lake Van. Possibly a fragment of the Hisulich, No. 1 A*, Section C.

8. Jibranli: 2,000 families. This is a tribe and confederation of eight tribes, as follows:—

8 A. Mukheli: ? families.

8 B. Arab Agha: ? families.

8 C. Torini: ? families.

8 D. Aliki: ? families.

8 E. Asdini: ? families.

8 F. Shaykhekan: ? families.

8 G. Mamagan: ? families. Probably connected with the Mamakanli (see No. 9 A, Section D).

8 H. Shadeli: ? families. Shias. A break off from No. 1 C, Section E.

8 I. Bellikan: 6,000 families. Zaza-speaking Kurds. Shias.

The tradition of the Jibranli is as follows: They lived in Arabistan (this to a Northern Kurd may mean Diarbekir) three months in houses, nine months in tents each year. A certain Assad Pasha ordered them to go to Bingol, near Mush. The Jibranli are now rapidly becoming completely sedentary. It seems pretty clear to us that this tribe is composed of the Jibranli and fractions of others who have separated from their own clans. These, I expect, were the original inhabitants of the mountains before the arrival of the Jibranli, by whom even now they are roughly treated, and apparently live in a kind of vassalage to the Jibranli. The Ballikan are somewhat more independent of the Jibranli and keep to themselves. The Jibranli women shave the top of their heads, as do the men. The men wear the most extraordinary clothes, something after the fashion of east-end costermongers, pearl buttons, black velvet collar and cuffs, baggy trousers, sash, and, among the well-to-do, a collar and tie; on the head is worn an enormous white felt "tarbash," about 1 foot high, bulging out like a busby; around this is turned a very small turban of silk. These are the only Kurds I have seen who dress in this way; I expect the costumes, except for the "tarbash," is a modern development. Another peculiarity of the Jibranli is that they wear carefully-trimmed "mutton-chop" whiskers and long hair; the whole combination is more than fantastic. I might add the Jibranli in appearance resemble the Haideranli, being grotesquely ugly.

9. Sipikanli: 3,000 families. This is a base tribe, dwelling north of Lake Van. They have the same rough manners as the Haideranli.

9 A. Mamakanli: ? families. Now count as a sub-tribe of the Sipikanli. They have been stated by some to be the ancient Mamagonians of the Armenian historics.

10. Zrikanli: 6,000 families. A tribe similar in all respects to the Jibranli (No. 8, Section D), save that it is one block tribe, as far as I know, with no proper sub-divisions. I could not ascertain whether they also reckoned themselves from Arabistan. They were nomadic, but have settled during the last ten years.

11. Rashwan: 70 families. Nomads.

12. Razikli: 70 families. Nomads.

13. Putikanli: ? families. Near Khighi, Kermanji. Sedentary.

14. Girdi: ? families. Evidently a migration from No. 7, Section A.

15. Pisianli: 700 families. Kermanji. Sedentary.

16. Shaykh Bezeini: 450 families. Two or three sedentary villages at Erzeroum; obviously a migration from No. 3, Section A.

16 A. Shaykh Bezeini: ? families. Reported to be some near Tortwin; a migration from No. 3, Section A.

17. Zilanli: ? families.

18. Badeli: ? families. At Alashgert. Shias.

19. Shaderli: ? families. A few semi-nomads at Alashgert. Shias.

20. Dashmouli: ? families. Same as No. 56, Section A. There are said to be many of this tribe in Persia, similar and connected with No. 56, Section A.

21. Hamdikan: ? families.

22. Manuranli: ? families.

23. Haideranli: 20,000 families. The largest tribe in existence; to be met with from Mush to Urumia. The whole tribe are a low, rough race of people of no merit either as soldiers, agriculturists, or shepherds.

24. Adamanli: 1,800 families. Semi-nomadic.

25. Yezidis: I was unable to discover the name of this tribe, who are devil-worshippers.

Section E.

This zone, which lies between the Kizil Irmak and the Euphrates, presents the traveller with a picture totally different to any other in Kurdistan. The Kurds have a different position, and no observer could imagine they belonged to the same race as those described in the preceding catalogues; however, the dialects correspond pretty closely, though a Kurd from Section A would find great difficulty in making himself understood. The tribes fall fairly easily into four classes:—

Class I.—Containing all Kurds included in No. 1, and its appendant letters.
Class II.—No. 2, and its appendant letters.
Class III.—No. 3, and other tribes in its vicinity whom I have been unable to catalogue.
Class IV.—The remaining numbers.

With regard to Class I, the Kurds in this division are completely sedentary, build fine villages, are industrious and intelligent, peaceful but extremely treacherous, and on occasion ruthless and cruel. Fair hair and blue eyes are not uncommon among them; the men are generally short but handsome, and very submissive in their demeanour. To each of these tribes are attached certain families of nomads, all extremely poor, dark skinned, and repulsively ugly, who claim common origin with the village dwellers.

The whole of Class I are reputed Shias, but undoubtedly have a secret religion.

Class II stands by itself, and I must refer the student to the catalogue.

Class III. The Sinaminli I have been inclined to connect with the Milan tribes No. 1 H* to No. 1 R*, Section C.

However, I have come to the conclusion that this would be a mistake. Police and Government officials count them all as Kizilbash Kurds, but I am inclined to think the Sinaminli are really exiles from Azerbaijan. They are complete Shias, but certainly have no pagan rites or secrets.

They are fine handsome people, good farmers, literate, and very artistic in the painting of the interior of their house.

Class IV are, generally speaking, nomads from Diarbekir or Lake Van, who have drifted down the Taurus slopes towards the Mediterranean.

They are now settling down as sedentary agriculturists, or hire themselves as shepherds. The shepherds dwell in tents, with stone walls in winter, tents in summer, and bowers in autumn. They are kind and hospitable, and have a good reputation.

1. Kureshli: 2,000 families. Speak Kermanji. Shias or Pantheists. These Kermanji-speaking Kurds of the north are an utterly different race to any of the foregoing tribes. They are handsome quiet people, who detest orthodox Moslems, and are always very reserved and quiet in the presence of the latter. They seem to have no predatory or nomadic instincts at all; but behind their silent demeanour there is a strange savage spirit which I have noticed among no other Kurds. They are excellent farmers, and much inclined to philosophic speculation; this latter point is curious, since they are seemingly illiterate. Another point in which they differ from all other Kurds are their peculiarly quiet manners and lack of humour. Tribes I have noticed as seeming to belong to this group I mark—

1 A. Balabranli (small): 60 families. Shias in name, dwell on the opposite bank of Euphrates. Curiously enough these people talk the Kermanji dialect. Seemingly they are more akin to the Badeli, No. 1 D and No. 1 C, Section E, in appearance than to the Dersimli.

1 B. Balabranli (great): 500 families. A little south of Erzinjian. Zaza speaking. Shias in name, apparently Pantheists.

1 C. Shaderli: 3,000 families. Shias or Pantheists. A type similar to, but lower, than the Kureskli. Live in underground houses. Very poor agriculturists.

1 D. Badeli: 700 families. Kermanji Shias; semi-nomadic. There are said to be a few near Rowanduz.

2. Kochkiri: 10,000 families. This is a very peculiar tribe, or perhaps one might almost call them a separate nation. The men and women are of a peculiar type (dealt with in the introduction), being dark, with finely-chiselled features, and resembling no other Kurdish race. Their language is seemingly a dialect of Kurdish, but hardly comprehensible to Zazas, or Baba Kurds, or Diarbekir Kermanjis. In religion I take

them to be advanced Pantheist, who recognize nature as a female principal and God as a male. This opinion I give with every reservation, still, as the result of interpreted conversations with well-to-do village elders. I am inclined not to group the Kochkiri among the tribes marked , as their habits are not the same; the Kochkiri are miserable farmers, and dwell in semi-underground dwellings similar to those in the Mush Plain and north of Lake Van. A fact, made more peculiar when one notices that the Armenians and Moslems who live near the Kochkiri, live in well-built villages with hewn stone houses.

The Kochkiri tradition is that they lived on the Dersim, but were driven thence by the present mountaineers. The Kochkiri are an unwarlike people who bear no arms, and are extremely submissive. The Moslems say that they are treacherous, and have very little regard for human life. I am inclined to believe that many Kochkiri inhabit the little-known district north of the Sivas–Zara road. I had not time to make further investigations.

The divisions of the Kochkiri are as follows:—

2 A. Sarolar.
2 B. Barlolar. } In the vicinity of Karajaran.
2 C. Garnolar.
2 D. Ibolar. In the vicinity of Hamobad.

2 E. Eski (old), Kochkiri: 400 families. This is a tribe near Erzinjian, who, the Kochkiri say, have no connection with them, but were driven out of the Kochkiri by tribes Nos. 150 A, 150 B, 150 C, 150 D, from which we may infer that Kochkiri is not the real name of Nos. 150 A, 150 B, 150 C, 150 D.

3. Sinaminli: 2,500 families. This is a large tribe of real Shias, dwelling in the vicinity of Malatia. They are apparently a distinct race from the Kochkiri and Kurds marked . These are true Shias, and, by report, their dialect more nearly approaches modern Persian than any other of the Kurds. They are very friendly to Europeans and strangers—a fact that may have given rise to the idea that all Shias or Kizilbash are so, and I have had bitter experience to the contrary.

4. Kurejik: ? families. This sounds an unlikely name.

5. Al Khass: 500 families. There is a mountain called Al Khass south-east of Aleppo, from which this tribe may have taken its name.

6. Kodir Zor: 600 families.

7. Kara Hassan: 300 families. This may be a Turkoman tribe. (See the Deguignes index of names.)

8. Chughrishanli: 500 families. Probably sedentary.

9. Nederli: ? families.

10. Doghanli: 250 families. Nomads.

11. Dellianli: ? families. A small tribe of nomads near Marash.

12. Jellikanli: ? families. Some at Van, others in the Marash Plain. Latter are poor shepherds.

13. Lek Kurdi: ? families. This is a small tribe near Adana; they are said to speak Turkish. The name is familiar to Kurds on the Persian border, who say there are some in the Persian dominions.

14. Dellikanli: 200 families. A small tribe of nomads of the Marash Plain. The men are tall and well built, the women good-looking. These people live in ordinary Kurdish tents in summer on the Taurus slopes; in winter they proceed to fixed camps about 30 miles west of Killis. The fixed camps have stone walls for the tents. This applies equally to Nos. 10, 11, and 12, and No. 1 H* in Section C.

15. Bellikanli: 250 families. Complete nomads. Kermanji dialect; rove about the Marash Valley; no horses.

Section F.

This zone is quite outside Kurdistan proper, and represents the various forcible migrations of tribes from all parts of Kurdistan undertaken by Sultan Selim the Conqueror. The catalogue will give approximate points from whence they came.

Interest is given to the matter by the following trifle which I remarked: Near Angora I met men from tribes Nos. 15 and 17; they wore a similar dress and turban, the turban being twisted in a peculiar manner. Near Erzinjian I remarked the same peculiar turban—which I had not seen elsewhere—being worn by certain Turks. I asked them what was the meaning of this headdress, whereupon they replied that they were

descendants of Janissaries who had been given lands by Sultan Selim after his conquest. A visit to the Museum of the Janissaries, and reference to some prints of Sultan Selim's period, showed me that this turban, which has now gone out of fashion, was the common headdress of that day.

The reason it is worn by these two colonies is obvious: the descendants of the Janissaries were isolated from other Turks and observed the fashion of their fathers. The tribesmen in Anatolia had evidently adopted Turkish dress soon after being exiled, but, being an isolated people, did not follow the changing fashions of later times.

1. Ukhchicomi: 300 families. Sedentary.
2. Urukchili: 400 families. These may be Yuruks.
3. Milli: 20 families. A small band of shepherds I met near Osmanjik; they said they were Milli, and have evidently come from either the Dersim or Karaja Dagh.
4. Shaykh Bezeini: 120 families. Nomads, living near Boiabad in Antolia; say they were driven there from No. 3, Section A, by Sultan Selim. Wear Anatolian dress, and now talk Kermanji dialect.
5. Sheveli: ? families. A forcible migration from No. 71 E, Section A.
6. Badeli: 200 families. Sedentary; branch have settled near Yuzghat; these are now orthodox Moslems, and date their conversion seventy years back. I presume a forcible migration from No. 1 D, Section E.
7. Hajji Banli: 300 families. Semi-nomadic, sub-tribe of No. 1, Section C. A forcible migration from the Dersim or Karaja Dagh.

7 A. Khatun Oghli: 400 families. Semi-nomadic, sub-tribe of No. 1, Section C, from Karaja Dagh.

7 B. Makhani: 300 families. Semi-nomadic, from Karaja Dagh; sub-tribe of No. 1, Section C.

7 C. Ormanli: 800 families. Semi-nomadic, from Karaja Dagh; sub-tribe of No. 1, Section C.

8. Barakatli: 1,000 families.
9. Tabur Oghli: 300 families. Semi-nomadic; might be Turkomans, but I was assured they were not.
10. Shaykh Bezeini; ? families. Reported to be some near Alashgerd; a migration from No. 3, Section A.
11. Judi Kanli: 200 families. Perhaps a migration from Jebel Judi, near Shernakh.
12. Khalkani: 400 families. The name of a tribe now extinct, which used to live near Rowanduz.
13. Seif Kani: 500 families. Semi-nomadic.
14. Nasurli: 600 families.
15. Tirikan: 400 families. A colony of Kurds planted north of the railway line, about 24 miles west of Angora (for origin, see No. 9, Section B).
16. Atmanakin: ? families. A small section reported in tents near Angora; probable a forcible migration from No. 58, Section A.
17. Zirikanli: 500 families. Near Angora; migration from No. 10, Section D.
18. Janbekli: 5,000 families. Mixed, nomads, semi-nomads, and sedentary expelled by Selim from No. 1 M°, Section C (the most westerly Kurds).

Alphabetical List of Kurdish Tribes.

Name.	No.	Section.
Abbasanli	31 H	B
Abu Tahir	7	C
Acu	23	A
Adamanli	24	D
Alan	16	A
,, ...	76 K	A
Alian	15 M	C
Alikanli	62	A
Alki	8 D	D
Al Khass	5	E
Alush	17	C
Arab Agha	8 B	D
Asdini	8 K	D
Ashaghi	38	A
Ashmishirt	25	B
Atmanakan	58	A
,, ...	16	F
Azli	4	D
Badeli	30	A
,, ...	18	D
,, ...	1 D	E
,, ...	6	F
Bakhtiarli	31 E	B

Name.	No.	Section.
Baki Khassa	17	A
Balabranli	1 A	E
,, ...	1 B	E
Balashaghi ..	31 I	B
Balian	56	A
Baliki	27	A
Baradost	33	A
,, ...	33 A	A
Barakatli	8	F
Barguhan	1 Z	C
Barhan	5	C
Barko-shan	78	A
Barlolar	2 B	F
Basliumali	20	D
Bazikli	12	D
Bederi	16	B
Behirmaz	30	B
Beit-el-Khulta ..	16 D	C
Bejwan	10	A
Bekiran	16 H	C
Bekran	6	B
Beled	16 G	C
Belliear	67	A
Bellikan	81	D
Bellikanli	15	E
Benzdeh	19	C
Berizanli	6 A	D
Beroz	76 F	A
Berwari	44	A
Berzan	34	A
Besheri	8	B
Beski	1 G*	C
Beyleyan Porga ..	18*	C
Bilbas	22	A
Bilijan	73	A
Boskan	18	B
Bubanli	20 B	B
Bujak	1 E*	C
Bundeywit	15 A	C
Bunesi	12	C
Butan	71 D	A
Chaikessen	4	C
Chakali	1 J*	C
Chalabkan	1 F	C
Chanesh	1 B*	C
Chelebchick	10	C
Chighirsbanli	8	E
Chukurli	3	D
Dachbashi	1 D*	C
Dakhuri	51	A
,, ...	11	C
Daman	1 A	C
Dashi	1 K	C
Dasskan	15 L	C
Dauloh	4	A
Delikanli	11	E
Delli Kanli	14	E
Del Mandkan	15 E	C
Dere	43	A
Dersim	1 O*	C
,, ...	1 R*	C
Dersimli	31	B
Dinar or Dinardich ..	18	C
Dir, hauli	10	E
Dumma	15 F	C
Duzkan	15 G	C
Dzebki	41	A
,, ...	41 A	A
Dzelie	2	A
Dzherri	64	A
Dzelikanli	1 D	C
Emerzan	9	C
Ertu	57	A
Eska	29	B
Eska	1 Q*	C
El Kawat	1 J	C
Estergetch	1 L*	C
Erikli	20 F	B
Erdinan	76 A	A
Ferhad Ushaghi	31 D	B
Garnolar	2 C	E
Gavdan	76 S	A
Gewiji	73	A
Ghowruk	19	A
Girdi	7	A
,, ...	7 A	A
,, ...	11	D
Girgiri	15 K	C
Giyran	74	A
,, ...	31 L	B
,, ...	8	C
Goyan	53	A
Guli	52	A
Guran	13	A
Gurus	27	B
Halabu	16 E	C
Haideranli	23	D
Haji	32	A
Haji Bairam	1 N	C
Haji Manli	1 H*	C
Hajian	76 Q	A
Haji Banli	7	F
Hajaji	63	A
Hamawand	11	A
Hamdikan	21	D
Hartushi	76	A
Haruna	15 D	C
Hassanali	6	D
Hassankan	1 O	C
Hassena	39	A
,, ...	51	A
Haseran	6	C
Haverka	15 I	C
Hawatan	66	A
Haweri	48	A
Hazil	32	A
Hedikh	1 A*	C
Heshim	1 P*	C
Hodar	2 D	C
Isadat	1 R	C
Ivdi	7	D
Jaff	12	A
Jambez	1 M*	C
Jandekli	18	F
Jelali	14	B
Jelali	12	A
Jeli	53	A
Jelikanli	12	E
Jibranli	8	D
Jinki	76 G	A
Jindi Kanli	11	F
Kalendelan	1 W	C
Kao	1 P*	C
Karabanli	31	B
Karagetch	2	C
Kara Hassan	7	E
Kassani	11*	C
Kedal	31 H	B
Kedas	21	B
Kekr	66	A
Kelish	1 F	C
Keskeli	3	B
Keyloran	20 A	B
Khalapan	1 L	C
Khalyari	1 F	C

Name.	No.	Section.
Khalkani	12	F
"	8	A
Khani	68	A
Khatun Oghli	7 A	F
Khawistan	76 K	A
Khazali	15	B
Khoshnao	21	A
Khaloner	18	A
Kichian	60	A
Kinarlerosh	73	A
Kiran	1 G	C
"	16 F	C
Kochkiri	2	E
" (Ezki)	2 E	E
Kadir Zor	6	E
Kohan	45	A
Kulkin	26	B
Kumnarosh	1 H	C
Kurejik	4	E
Kureshli	1	E
Kurran	19	B
Kusan	20 G	B
Kuzlichan	10	B
"	31 K	B
Latchin Ushaghi	31 J	B
Lek Kurdi	13	E
Lolanli	5	D
Mahalemi	15 C	C
Mahani	7 B	F
Maleshigo	17	B
Malkari	20	A
Mamadan	76 M	A
Mamagan	8 G	D
Mamakan	26	A
Mamakanli	9 A	D
Mamash	24	A
Mamed	76 D	A
Mamkhor	76 J	A
Mamresh	76 C	A
Mamud	6	A
Mamuranli	22	D
Matnieu	1 K	C
Meadan	32	A
"	1 G	C
Meadkan	16 I	C
Mengeb	25	A
Merdis	1 K*	C
Merzigi	76 B	A
Meshkenli	1 L	C
Milan	31 A	B
Milli	1	C
"	3	F
Miran	50	A
Mirkan	16 B	C
Mirsman	13	C
Mirzanli	31 G	B
Misiri	40	A
Mizdagh	15 K	C
Mizrakh	15 A	C
Modeki	20	B
Monan	15 H	C
Moleri	71 B	A
Mukheli	8 A	D
Munkan	1 Q*	C
Mustafan	73	A
Must	12	B
Musuk	1	B
Nasrian	1 T	C
Nasuli	14	F
Nedeli	9	E
Nestorian Christians ..		A
Nevi	35	A
Nuredi	14	A

Name.	No.	Section.
Omaranli	7 G	F
"		
Penjinan	2	B
"	1	D
Pinjari	21	B
Pinianishli	73	A
"	73 A	A
Piran	15	A
Pirashini	28	A
Pir Musi	20 G	B
Pismanli	15	D
Pouran	4	B
Putikanli	13	D
Rashwan	11	D
Reikan	36	A
Reshkan	47	A
Reshkotanli	7	B
Rutchaba	20 D	B
Salahan	15 J	C
Samuga	16 C	C
Sarmi	13	B
Sarolar	2 A	E
Sartan	1 V	C
Saur	15 B	C
Sejdan	1 B	C
Seif Kani	13	F
Shatak	5	A
Shaderli	8 H	D
"	19	D
"	1 C	E
Sharafan	76 L	A
Shawak	31 C	B
Shaykhekan	8 F	D
Shayshan	46	A
"	4	A
Shaykh Bozoini	3	A
" "	16	D
" "	16 A	D
" "	4	E
" "	10	F
Shaykhdodanli	5	B
Shekak	71	A
"	71 F	A
Shekifti	71 A	A
Shemski	75	A
Sheskan	1 I	C
Shemzakhli	53 A	A
Sheveli	71 C	A
"	71 E	A
"	5	F
Shevilan	75	A
Shidan	76 H	A
Shiriki	55	A
Shiwan	31	A
Shukan	59	A
"	2	D
Simanishli	5	E
Sinan	28	A
Sineri	52	A
Sipskanli	9	D
Shvan	22	B
Skope	52	A
Spidi	49	A
Suratawan	73	A
Surchi	9	A
Surkishli	11	C
Tabor Oghli	9	F
Tabuli	69	A
Tchuwan	1 U	C
Tezkan	1 S	C
Tirikan	9	B
"	15	F
Tiyan	64	A

Name.	No.	Section.
Terini	8 C	D
Tur Abdin tribes	15 ;C	D
Ukhchiami	1	F
Urukehili	2	F
Usbakhan	1 W	C
Yezidis	16	C
"	25	D
Zazas (non-tribal)	23	B
Zebar	37	A
Zedek	76 O	A
Zefki	76 P	A
Zeidan	20 E	B
Zekeri	11	B
Zemzan	29	A
Zerhati	32	A
Zerzan	72	A
Zeydan	32	A
"	73	A
Zilanli	17	D
Zirikanli	10	D
"	17	F
Zirofkan	1 C*	C

[28506] No. 80.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received August 26.)

(No. 514.)

Sir, *Therapia, August* 20, 1907.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 434 of the 22nd ultimo, I have the honour to transmit copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Hodeidah giving an account of further serious disturbances created in the town by time-expired soldiers.

In another despatch Mr. Richardson reports that, in consequence of these disturbances, the Italian gun-boat "Aretusa" was sent to Hodeidah from Massowa, but she only arrived on the 25th ultimo, when the town was again quiet. Her visit caused some irritation to the local authorities, who had, however, made no effort themselves to restore tranquillity or prevent excesses.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 80.

Vice-Consul Richardson to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 48.)

Sir, *Hodeidah, July* 25, 1907.

WITH reference to previous correspondence with your Excellency on the subject, I have now the honour to again bring to notice another series of disturbances caused in this town by time-expired soldiers; that, besides dislocating trade in general for nearly a fortnight, set up a feeling of uneasiness in the minds of both foreigners and of the local population alike, principally owing to the unconcern of the authorities, and, at the same time, of their utter inability to cope with the situation.

Since the beginning of the month, these soldiers had begun to arrive from all parts of the interior, as well as by sea from the neighbouring ports of Loheia, Geezan, Ras Zebeed, and Mokha, having in many instances thrown down their arms and left their stations without permission, owing to having completed their regular term of service in the "nizam."

Their numbers had exceeded 1,500 by the 10th instant when they proceeded in a body to the house of the local Commandant, Arif Pasha, and demanded their "teskere" (discharge papers). They forcibly compelled the General to accompany them to the command offices and to start issuing the above.

Later in the day a considerable number of these soldiers visited the bazaars and warned all traders that their shops would be sacked if kept open, thus compelling all tradesmen to close their places of business for two or three days thereafter.

As is usual on such occasions, the source of the water supply of the town was seized, and the supply intercepted for some days.

When the Khedivial mail steamer "Missir" was lying off in the roadstead on the 10th instant, a body of soldiers made a noisy demonstration at the landing stage, and demanded to be sent home in that vessel.

In the presence of the Governor and the General Officer Commanding, the captain and the agent of the Khedivial Company were prevented by the mutinous

troops from embarking, when the ship was ready to proceed on her voyage to Suez, and were threatened to be detained unless they carried away the time-expired men.

I warned the Vali by telegraph and the local Mutessarif that the Government would be held responsible for any loss accruing to the British Shipping Company through delay to its vessel caused by the action of these time-expired soldiers. The latter were ultimately induced with promises that they would very soon be shipped home, to quit the pier, and allow the captain of the "Missir" to embark.

The following week witnessed a continuation of these disorderly scenes by the "istibdal," who now commenced to forcibly enter in numbers the houses of Arabs and offer insults to their women.

Affairs reached a crisis on the night of the 19th, when the mutineers, fully 1,500 strong, turned out at between 6 and 7 in the evening, and attacked the bazaars and ran loose in the town. They captured several rifles from the sentries on duty at various posts, and planned a rush on the fort and ammunition and powder magazines, which they intended to blow up.

Their attempt was baffled by certain officers receiving information of their intentions in time, and issuing orders to the guards concerned to open fire on the mutineers, which they did, thus driving them off. The latter next proceeded to attack and enter private houses and carry off women, which enraged the townspeople beyond endurance, who turned out a few thousands strong. An encounter ensued between the Arabs and the soldiers, and rifles, daggers, and clubs were freely used, resulting in the latter being put to flight after having four men killed and fourteen wounded seriously. Two more deaths occurred amongst the above wounded since.

The action of the local population appears to have checked further disturbance on the part of the soldiers, whose mutinous plans seemed to have collapsed very suddenly.

The Arabs have hitherto been afraid to retaliate on account of the authorities, but in the above instance a hint had been thrown out to them by certain prominent officials that they would be justified in responding to the call to repel the attacks from the troops.

A reconciliation has since been effected between the townspeople and the soldiers, and things have quieted down very suddenly.

It is now three weeks since these troops continued to pour into Hodeidah, and their numbers have swelled to over 2,000, but there are no transports available to take them away, although the military authorities have been expecting a ship daily for the past month.

Rumours are current here of the outbreak of a mutiny, incited by their officers amongst the troops up at Sana'a and other places at the front, and that an Albanian battalion has thrown down its arms and is about to come down to Hodeidah.

The authority of the Commander-in-chief has been set at naught at the capital, and from accounts from a reliable source it would appear that there is no discipline amongst the troops, and that Fezi Pasha is afraid to interfere owing to having no troops at his disposal on whom he may rely to enforce his orders.

I am informed that the transport "Assyr," that left Constantinople at the end of June with drafts for the Yemen, was obliged to return on account of a mutiny on board amongst the troops, and their refusal to come out to this vilayet.

With truth and great respect, I have, &c.

(Signed) G. A. RICHARDSON.

[28512] No. 81.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received August* 26.)

(No. 520.)

Sir, *Therapia, August* 20, 1907.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 314 of the 28th May, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van reporting on the grave state of affairs prevailing in that district.

It would seem that the harsh and impolitic action of the Vali has resulted in bringing about a sort of understanding between the Armenian revolutionaries and the Young Turk party; and Captain Dickson gives it as his opinion that the numerical strength of the former is even now more than sufficient to overcome the troops. The Vali professes to have no fears on the score of Fedai or Young Turks, but admits anxiety with regard to the military, who are demanding their arrears of pay. There

appears to be a very serious deficit in the Budget of the vilayet, and little prospect of obtaining money except by the unpopular expedient of collecting arrears of taxes, to which, however, his Excellency boldly proposes to have recourse almost immediately.

In the face of these difficulties the authorities at Van are further embarrassed by orders to mobilize troops for service on the Persian frontier. The position seems to be an anxious one from every point of view.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 81.

Vice-Consul Dickson to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 14.)

Sir, *Van, August* 4, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency my return to Van from Bitlis; an account of my journey I am making the subject of a separate report, but I wish to bring to your notice the present feeling in this vilayet. As regards revolutionary plans, &c., it is difficult to distinguish between the truth and what is invented for Consular digestion, but I have done my best to sift the following facts. As your Excellency is aware of from my previous despatches, Ali Bey has made himself unpopular by his harsh action in collecting arrears of taxes; this, principally affecting the Armenians, has caused an extraordinary increased activity on the part of the revolutionary organizations, principally the Tashnak, so much so that I am informed that at the present moment they hope to be able at a signal to place 2,000 armed men in Van, while within a few hours some 3,000 would come in from the villages, and in a few days many more thousands would arrive from Russia. These numbers are startling, and I consider exaggerated, but I have no doubt that at the present their organization, arms, and numerical strength is greater than it has ever been, and is more than sufficient to overcome the troops here.

During the time of Tahir Pasha the revolutionary movement in Van was passive, *i.e.*, it only took the form of punishing the misdeeds of Armenians, but, as I have already informed you, Ali Bey arrived here with the idea that the country was on the point of a great revolution, and that it was he personally, with his enlightened administration, which had frustrated it; needless to say, he is entirely to blame for the present state of affairs. First, his action in tax collecting; then his despotic independence of the other officials, alienating him from the Moslems; then his private character, having Armenian girls brought to his house, and an affair in which a Moslem woman was concerned, has offended the Moslems.

Some time in April last some Moslem revolutionary agitators were supposed to have arrived from Erzeroum to start an agitation here. They published a few lithographed papers which were left about the town, but not much was thought of the matter, as the Turks in Van are not numerous, are mostly employés, are in no way united, and have no Chiefs, religious or otherwise; the Kurds are not credited with sufficient intelligence for intriguing. I have since been informed that in April last there were meetings between the Armenian Revolutionary Committee with these agitators and some Mollahs and other Turks, with a view to combination, though what the outcome was I am unable to say, but lately everything tends to show that the Fedai are doing all in their power to court Moslem sympathy and union, as is shown by the inclosed Proclamations, and by the attitude of the bands of armed Fedai when they meet small parties of zaptiehs or soldiers without their officers; with these they fraternize, give them cigarettes, &c. There is no doubt that this has had a considerable effect on the lower class Turks, soldiers, zaptiehs, &c., as in talking with them they openly express more or less sympathy with the Fedai, condemning the Vali's policy; and whenever the two come together now the troops and zaptieh show little fight, and the Fedai invariably escape.

On the 10th June last a bomb exploded accidentally in a house in Van, killing three and wounding five, it was said, though it was never proved, as the bodies were hidden. The house was searched, and various empty bombs, rifles, &c., were found. On this the Vali redoubled his efforts to capture revolutionists, commencing the searching of Armenian houses wholesale.

On the 16th June an Armenian police agent was assassinated by the Fedai for being a spy and for his part in the house-searching.

On the 22nd June ten Fedai, with Aram, a chief of the Tashnaks, were located at Varak Dagh, two hours from Van, and surrounded by forty zaptieh. The zaptiehs ran away; the Fedai escaped after killing the officer; an Armenian who had served as guide to the Fedai was also killed. I understand that this was reported to the Sultan as a great victory, in which five Fedai were killed; anyhow, the runaway zaptiehs received 100*l.* and many decorations from the Sultan.

On the 25th June there was a slight panic in Van bazaar, caused by some private quarrel, which the timorous Armenians construed as a massacre. The Vali in this instance behaved well, having troops posted everywhere, and restoring calm.

On the 10th July orders arrived for the mobilization of the 1st and 2nd Battalions 59th Regiment of Redif, and 18th, 20th, 39th and 59th Regiments of Hamidieh. This was interpreted for action against the Armenians, and did not tend to quieten affairs.

Some time last June the Vali took as a confidante a young Armenian, Armenak Effendi, brother of the Mouavin, and a rather contemptible character. This individual he employed as a pimp and spy, taking him everywhere with him. On the 15th July Armenak was assassinated in broad daylight in the streets of Van by the Fedai, who immediately afterwards issued the inclosed Proclamation. Owing to the further menaces of the Fedai and the murder of his brother, the Mouavin has been transferred from Van, and left for Constantinople on the 1st August with a strong military escort.

The searching of houses has caused a great deal of ill-feeling, and this has spread to the Turks, as latterly some Moslem houses have been searched. In two instances houses, in which Fedai were suspected of being, were surrounded by zaptiehs, who then fired volleys at the houses to see if the fire would be returned, and then entered and ransacked them.

All this has served to greatly incense the people against the Vali, and he has received three letters from the Tashnak Committee warning him that, if he does not either stop these tactics or resign, he will be assassinated; also a warning from the Young Turks that he will be treated as the Bitlis Vali was. I have information, though I will not vouch for its accuracy, that within ten days an attempt is to be made to assassinate him.

I am also informed that the Vali has received orders from Constantinople that at all costs he is to discover and to prosecute the murderers of Armenak Effendi. This being the case, trouble may possibly ensue, as I am given to understand that the Tashnak Committee have decided not to wait for massacres, which are out of fashion as such, but, relying on the present *entente* with the Young Turks and the troops and Moslem general dislike of the Vali, when the occasion offers or requires, they intend to mobilize their bands and to occupy a certain quarter of Van gardens and hold this against the Government while proclaiming revolt and hoping for reinforcements from Russia. I cannot vouch for this, though I think it advisable to inform your Excellency, in case it may be true.

Personally, I doubt that there will be any serious trouble, although all the missionaries and Armenians who are at all well-informed think there will be; but it is certain that the Tashnak are now powerful and active, and that there is this *entente* with the so-called Young Turks. It is even said that there are Turkish members of the Tashnak Committee here, and that if a Moslem employé, &c., is condemned by the Fedai, the sanction of the Young Turk Committee is first obtained before assassinating him.

Talking to the Vali on the subject, he said that he did not fear the Fedai nor the Turks, who were too few, but he did fear the military, who required paying, but as a matter of fact he is living in a perfect hell of nervousness and fear at present. My Russian and French colleagues had told me that he had informed them that he intended to recommence collecting arrears of taxes on the 1st August. I questioned him on the advisability of this, saying that, from what I had seen during my journey, there had been fewer fields sown and more houses vacated owing to his tax collecting in the spring. He denied this, stating that the official statistics showed that there was one-third more land sown this year than last. I informed him politely that his statistics were false, and this I have no hesitation in upholding, as in every village I passed there were houses emptied since last year, the owners having left mostly to beg in Van or elsewhere; also a large increase in uncultivated fields, the reason generally given being for want of seed or oxen. He told me he must have money; denied that he sent any to Constantinople; said the vilayet required 115,000*l.* a-year to run it. The total possible receipts were 105,000*l.*, leaving a deficit of 10,000*l.* to be supplied by Constantinople; that this year he had been told not to rely on getting this 10,000*l.*, but to carry on as best he could with what he could raise out of the vilayet; also he informed me that the total actual receipts of the vilayet were 60,000*l.*, leaving a real deficit of 55,000*l.*,

[28513] No. 81 A.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received August* 26.)

(No. 521.)

Sir, *Constantinople, August* 21, 1907.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 287 of the 19th ultimo, I have the honour to forward herewith a *note verbale* addressed to the Sublime Porte on the subject of the treatment of the officers of His Majesty's ship "Lapwing" by the Turkish authorities at Katif in connection with piracy in the Persian Gulf.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 81 A.

Note Verbale communicated by Sir N. O'Conor to the Ottoman Government.

(No. 54.)

HIS Britannic Majesty's Embassy has the honour to inform the Sublime Porte that His Majesty's Government have received with great surprise a report showing that the Commander of His Majesty's ship "Lapwing" met with most unfriendly behaviour on the part of the Ottoman authorities at Katif, when he visited that place with a view to discussing with the Kaimakam the proceedings of the notorious pirate Ahmed-bin-Selman who was said to be encamped not far off.

The Sublime Porte will recollect that the facts concerning this pirate were brought to its notice by His Majesty's Embassy on the 18th September, 1906, when the hope was expressed that the Commander of the "Lapwing" might count on the co-operation of the Ottoman authorities in the accomplishment of his duty.

Far from receiving this co-operation, on which His Majesty's Government had every right to rely, the Commander, when he landed at Katif on the 21st June, was stopped at the gate of the town by the Turkish port officer and Customs officer, who insolently told him that the Kaimakam would not see him, and that he had no right to land without the permission of higher authorities, evidently acting under the direct orders of the Kaimakam, who was in his house close by. Finally, as the attitude of the Turkish authorities was so hostile, the Commander re-embarked and returned to Bushire.

His Majesty's Embassy has received instructions from His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to draw the serious attention of the Ottoman Government to the discourtesy of the local officials, whose action practically amounted to sheltering the pirate, and to request that immediate and categorical instructions may be issued with a view to the prevention of similar incidents in future.

Therapia, August 19, 1907.

[28696] No. 81 B.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(*Received August* 27.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a Secret despatch to the Government of India, dated the 22nd instant, with inclosures, relative to the working of the red oxide deposits on the Island of Abu Musa.

India Office, August 26, 1907.

Inclosure 1 in No. 81 B.

Mr. Morley to Government of India.

(Secret.)

My Lord, *India Office, August* 23, 1907.

WITH reference to the Secret letter of your Excellency's Government in the Foreign Department, dated the 27th June last, regarding the working of the red oxide

deposits on the Island of Abu Musa, I inclose copy of correspondence with the Foreign Office and Messrs. F. C. Strick and Co. on the subject.

2. Your proceedings are approved, and Messrs. F. C. Strick and Co. have been requested, in accordance with your suggestion, to postpone action on any agreement they may come to with the Sheikh for working the oxide.

3. As regards future arrangements, His Majesty's Government concur in the view expressed in your telegram of the 8th April to the Resident at Bushire, that it would be better that no monopoly should be granted by the Sheikh. The draft of any contract into which he may desire to enter should be referred for my consideration before it is finally sanctioned.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN MORLEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 81 B.

India Office to Foreign Office, dated July 26, 1907.

[Already printed.]

Inclosure 3 in No. 81 B.

Foreign Office to India Office, dated August 6, 1907.

[Already printed.]

Inclosure 4 in No. 81 B.

India Office to Messrs. Strick and Co.

Gentlemen, *India Office, August* 21, 1907.

WITH reference to the contract which it is understood your firm contemplate entering into with the Sheikh of Shargah for mining red oxide on the Island of Abu Musa, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Morley to inform you that the Government of India have expressed the opinion that, in view of local circumstances, it is necessary to postpone, at any rate till the end of the current year, action on any agreement that may be arrived at with the Sheikh in the matter.

Mr. Morley trusts that you will see your way to complying with the Government of India's request, and that you will take no action, even after the date mentioned above, without consulting them.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[29045] No. 82*.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(*Received August* 30.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 28th instant, relative to the Abu Musa Concession.

India Office, August 29, 1907.

Inclosure in No. 82*.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P. *August* 28, 1907.

OUR despatch of the 27th June last as to Concession on Abu Musa Island.

We received telegram from Resident in Gulf on the 23rd June, stating that report

had been received from Sheikh of Shargah to effect that Hassan Samaiyeh, the concessionnaire, had refused to stop mining operations, and had reinforced his miners, and that, in order to oust him from the island, force would be necessary. The Sheikh was afraid that result might be inconvenient conflict, and begged that Government would either advise him how to proceed or arrange matters themselves, as Hassan Samaiyeh is a British subject. We asked Resident to ascertain, so far as he was able, the number of miners entertained by the concessionnaire, whether they were armed, and their nationality, and to let us have his opinion as to the best means of effecting the removal of the concessionnaire and his employés from Abu Musa in the event of its being necessary for the Sheikh to remove them with our permission. On the 22nd August Resident replied to the following effect:—

"From Residency Agent's report it appears that from ten to fifteen labourers are always at mines, and that when a ship visits island she takes over about eighty men from the Persian coast, and returns them when done with.

"The Sheikh states that he can dispatch a boat-load of armed retainers whom he can trust with orders to persuade the miners to quit the island peacefully, and failing this to remove them by force. They would be sent to Lingah direct, if a Lingah dhow were available; otherwise they would be sent viâ Shargah. The present moment would be favourable for action, as, owing to heat of climate, numerical strength of miners is at lowest figure. Is there, before any action is taken, any obligation to address warning to the Persian Government? I hardly think it would be necessary."

We accept Resident's view, and, if action proposed is approved, we shall be glad to receive orders by telegraph. We would in the first place warn concessionnaire, as he is a British subject, to remove peacefully, and, in order to insure that no damage is done or unnecessary force used, we would also send a British ship to watch proceedings.

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and now on top of this he had to mobilize troops for Persia, and he must have money; that he would commence collecting again in about a week, but only from those who could well afford to pay. He is a prolific liar, and these statements do not at all agree with what he told my Russian colleague some six weeks ago.

With regard to the loot taken by the soldiers from Aktomar, nothing has been returned, and personally I do not believe the Vali made any efforts to find it, as I have only his word for it, and that is worthless.

With respect to your Excellency's despatch of the 21st May, I think by now I have informed you of all the facts of the case, and you will be able to judge of the Vali's honesty, uprightness, and just-mindedness. It is hard to say how many people in Havatsor are homeless without investigating on the spot, but I know there are large numbers that have left their villages and are now begging in Van.

I have, &c.

(Signed) BERTRAM DICKSON,
Captain, R.F.A.

[28512] No. 82.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 111.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, August* 29, 1907.

AFFAIRS in Van Vilayet: Your despatch No. 520 of the 20th instant.

You state in your telegram No. 111 of the 11th instant that orders were sent on the 9th instant for withdrawal of troops within neutral zone. Have orders been countermanded for mobilization at Van?

I should be glad if you would take an opportunity of bringing the serious state of affairs prevailing in that vilayet to the notice of the Sublime Porte.

[29277] No. 83.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 2.)

(No. 535.)
Sir, *Constantinople, August* 28, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem concerning the autonomous Administration for Arabia. Religious difficulties, he observes, render the realization of any such scheme impossible.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 83.

Consul Blech to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 32. Confidential.)
Sir, *Jerusalem, August* 10, 1907.

FOR some time past a series of pamphlets, publications, and newspaper articles has appeared advocating an autonomous Administration for what is termed "Arabia," and alleging that the population would welcome, and is ready to support the establishment of such an Administration.

Your Excellency is fully aware of the value to be attached to such statements, and has doubtless received exhaustive reports on the subject from other parts of the Empire. My own observation is limited to Jerusalem and Jaffa and their immediate neighbourhood, but I have availed myself of every opportunity for making discreet and confidential inquiry in this direction of various persons engaged in educational or missionary work both here and in outlying portions of Palestine, and the information which I have thus derived leads to the same conclusion as my own observations. All my informants agree in stating that while discontent and dislike of the Turks and their administrative methods prevail generally, no symptom is noticeable which would tend to support the belief that any cohesion exists between the different classes of the people.

Recent occurrences, though not within this district, have been reported to me which prove that religious differences are still as powerful as ever to effect a cleavage

among neighbours and fellow citizens; it is difficult to imagine the Moslems, Latins, Greeks, Greek Catholics, and Protestants of Palestine uniting against any common enemy. Some have assured me that there exists a strong desire for a European—preferably, according to certain among them, an English—occupation of Palestine. Others assert that the Moslem Notables of Palestine would be inclined to advise their co-religionists, who look to them for counsel, not to oppose a foreign occupation which could only tend to improve the condition of the country. But none are able to report the existence of anything like a homogeneous feeling of nationality among the people who, if they use any generic name which could be held to cover all classes of the population, are inclined occasionally to describe themselves as Syrians, but never employ the term "Arab," which seems here to be reserved for the Moslems alone.

The discontent at the system of government (which appears to me, if anything, to be rather less oppressive than in other parts of the Empire) finds vent in emigration, largely to America, both northern and southern. This is an undoubted loss to the country, as the outgoing Syrian peasant is not advantageously replaced by the Jewish immigrant, returning in fulfilment of prophecy, as many Christians devoutly believe, to the land of his fathers. I understand that the tide of immigration is decidedly slacker than it was; from a well-informed quarter I hear that during the last year some 2,000 Jews landed in Palestine, of whom 1,500 left again in the course of the year. Except for such as belong to the flourishing Colonies founded in the plain of Sharon and elsewhere by the munificence of wealthy Jews in Europe, the lot of the Jewish immigrant is not an enviable one—and usually leads to his becoming a dependant on the supplies sent by the faithful in other countries.

I cannot help thinking that the system of education pursued by the various missions, British and foreign alike, if not in part the cause of emigration, at least does nothing to prevent it. No attempt seems to me to be made to inspire the pupils, all Ottoman subjects, with any feeling of loyalty towards their sovereign or patriotism to their country. The instruction which they receive, except in some of the Roman Catholic Missions, is not such as to fit them for living useful lives in their own land, or for holding their own against the strenuous energy and active competition which they will encounter in the new world.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. C. BLECH.

[29280] No. 84.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 2.)

(No. 538.)

Sir, *Therapia, August 29, 1907.*

IN continuation of my despatch No. 467 of the 31st July, I have the honour to report that Mr. Vice-Consul Heard arrived at Moush on the 31st ultimo and met the Russian Consul at Bitlis there. He found much distress among the Armenians, who were afraid to leave their villages for fear of the Kurds. Continuing his journey to Bitlis, he saw that nothing was being done to protect the villagers, who were in a miserable condition. The number of independent farmers was rapidly decreasing, and it seemed to him evident that, unless something is done to lighten the burden of taxation and free them from debt, they must all become practically serfs of the Kurd proprietors. The people themselves appeared to be absolutely hopeless, and to regard emigration to Russia as their only chance of salvation. The Boulanik district was reported to be in an even worse condition than that of Moush.

On the 10th instant Mr. Heard reached Bitlis.

Telegraphing on the 20th instant, he reported that he had made verbal suggestions to the Vali on various fiscal questions and on the state of public security, nearly all of which his Excellency promised to carry out immediately if he could get authorization from the Porte. The Vali told Mr. Heard that the villagers declared themselves unable to pay the tithes if assessed on the average of the last five years, as the farms had greatly decreased in number during that period, and he said that he would find it necessary to have recourse to tithe farming. Mr. Heard suggested, and the Vali agreed, that it would be better to assess the tithe on the average paid per head than on that paid collectively during the last five years.

On the 24th Mr. Heard telegraphed that disorders were increasing in the vilayets; that there was a strong feeling against the Imperial Government in consequence of the

intolerable situation brought about by the state of the finances and the general administration; and that this feeling was fomented from other vilayets, and might lead to serious trouble.

I made repeated representations to the Grand Vizier on the state of things thus described, and on the 21st instant his Highness informed me that he had obtained the sanction of the Sultan for deporting some of the Kurdish and local Mahommedan Notables of Moush, who had shown a tendency not to abide by the decisions and injunctions of Tahir Pasha, whose mission it was to remedy the situation in the vilayet.

Tahir Pasha has since been appointed a member of the Turco-Persian Frontier Commission, but I have pointed out the serious consequences which his withdrawal might possibly have, as the affairs of the vilayet would remain in charge of the Defterdar whom Mr. Heard describes as useless.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[29555] No. 85.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 3.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of telegrams relative to the withdrawal of the Political Agent at Dthala.

India Office, September 2, 1907.

Inclosure 1 in No. 85.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P. *August 15, 1907.*

WITHDRAWAL from Dthala.

We repeated your telegram on this subject to the Government of Bombay, and have received a reply to the following effect:—

"We are sending by to-day's post (5th August) our opinion on the draft Agreements: a copy will be sent by next mail to Aden in order that Resident may press on arrangements in sense indicated, and also that he may be able to understand instructions sent to him by telegraph from India as to Agreements.

"In our opinion it would be most inadvisable that Captain Jacob should move until he has received the Agreements, approved for execution."

The Government of Bombay's opinion has just been received, and we are considering draft Agreements in light afforded by their remarks.

Inclosure 2 in No. 85.

Mr. Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, August 28, 1907.*

WITHDRAWAL of Political Officer, Dthala. Your telegram of the 15th August.

Delay, reasons for which I cannot understand, is cause of surprise and disappointment. Letters written on the 27th January, with full knowledge of local circumstances, by Resident showed that he agreed with Political Officer that withdrawal could be effected within a month from the date of those letters. You forwarded to me your proposals on the Resident's Report on the 27th April, an interval which afforded you full time for consideration, and my approval was conveyed to you in a telegram dated 14th June, on the explicit condition that the Political Officer was not to stay on Dthala for more than a month after receiving orders, which, by instructions given in my telegram of the 18th June, were to be conveyed to him forthwith. Your letter of the 27th April contained nothing indicating that the embodiment of the Resident's proposals in formal Agreements would cause material delay. I should, in that event,

have disallowed the Agreements, and decided to leave Resident and Political Officer to carry out withdrawals in the more expeditious fashion which they contemplated. Since the issue of my orders of the 18th June more than two months have elapsed, and the only action taken has apparently been the drafting of Agreements—the purport of which is not known to me—which were still under your consideration on the 10th August. It is hard to avoid the impression that unnecessary delay has occurred, notwithstanding the importance which my telegrams and despatches show was attached by His Majesty's Government to speedy action. I request that you will exclude from scope of Agreements any matters not strictly necessary for purposes of withdrawal, and that care is taken that nothing is included in Agreements likely to frustrate the policy of retirement, either by imposing fresh obligations on the tribes which we should have to enforce, or by creating disputes among the tribesmen themselves. Should it be found that this cannot be ensured, then the Agreements, if they be needed, must be considered at leisure, and the Political Officer should at once withdraw, merely explaining and arranging matters amicably with the tribes on the basis of the Agreements that already exist, and the arrangements which they accepted before Dthala was occupied by our troops.

[29553] No. 86.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 3.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of telegrams relative to affairs of the Aden hinterland.

India Office, September 2, 1907.

Inclosure 1 in No. 86.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P. *August 28, 1907.*

ADEN. Your telegram of the 25th ultimo.

In reply to telegram which we sent to the Government of Bombay on the 17th instant, we have received a telegram to the following effect :—

"Urgent instructions should be given to the Amir of Dthala not to mix himself up in any way in trans-frontier matters; and the Resident should be authorized, if circumstances necessitate, to give similar advice to other (Sheikhs ?) in hinterland with whom negotiations are being conducted, and to inform Imam of this, and that he also must respect the frontier."

We concur in Bombay Government's opinion. The communication to the Imam would be made only in the event of his attempting intrigues with our Chiefs or threatening the frontier.

Inclosure 2 in No. 86.

Mr. Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *August 29, 1907.*

WITHDRAWAL of Political Officer, Dthala. Your telegram of the 28th instant. Instructions should be given to the Political Agent, Dthala, that in making formal arrangements for withdrawal he should warn the Sheikh against taking part in trans-frontier affairs himself, or allowing his subjects to do so; and, if occasion warrants, similar advice should be given to other tribal Chiefs. Everything of the nature of a pledge, however, should be carefully avoided, and without previous sanction of His Majesty's Government no communication should be made to Imam from us. Please see my telegram of the 25th ultimo.

[29554] No. 86°.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 3.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 30th August, relative to the Abu Musa Concession.

India Office, September 2, 1907.

Inclosure in No. 86°.

Mr. Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, August 30, 1907.*

MINES on Abu Musa Island. Your telegram of the 28th August.

I presume that a written notice signed by the Sheikh has been given to the concessionnaire requiring him and his workmen to withdraw, in addition to the document cancelling the contract. This course is necessary in view of legal or other action which may follow. The concessionnaire should be warned, as British subject, as you propose, to remove his men, and no effort spared to induce him to do so voluntarily. Force should not be used except in last resort, and then only in presence of one of His Majesty's ships, which, in accordance with your proposal, should be sent to the island.

[29834] No. 87.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 5.)

(No. 117.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, September 5, 1907.*

TURCO-PERSIAN frontier. Your telegram No. 111 of the 29th ultimo.

I am informed by Captain Dickson that the proposed mobilization of Hamidieh has been postponed for lack of funds. Though from 200 to 300 men were called out, they were subsequently sent home.

I had made representations regarding the situation at Van before receiving your instructions to do so, and I will report the result of my action in the matter.

[30070] No. 88.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 9.)

(No. 547.)
Sir, *Therapia, September 3, 1907.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 537 of the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a Memorandum by Mr. George Lloyd, who has just returned from his tour through the Asiatic provinces, earnestly advocating the maintenance of the Church Missionary Society's branch at Mosul.

I trust that this most eloquent appeal will furnish effective arguments from the humanitarian point of view for inducing the Church Missionary Society not to withdraw a Mission which has done such splendid work among the people of Mosul and the surrounding region, and, as regards the political importance of its maintenance, I feel that I can add nothing to Mr. Lloyd's convincing statement, particularly as I have already urged more than once the necessity of taking measures to uphold British interests in Mosul.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 88.

Memorandum by Mr. Lloyd.

SOME attention has been drawn recently to the work of the Church Missionary Society in Mesopatamia by two attacks upon the work of that Society's branch at Mosul.

The first attack was made shortly before my visit to Mosul in June of this year by the Chaldæan Patriarch at Mosul. Couched in exceptionally bitter language and most inaccurate in statement, it was preached by order of the Patriarch in all the Chaldæan churches in Mosul and the surrounding district, with the dual object of impairing and breaking down the personal influence that Dr. Griffiths' successful medical work has naturally gained for him amongst all creeds and classes in the vilayet, and aiming at the prevention of any Christians in the district from applying to the Mission for medical aid in time of illness.

The attack, however, had little effect amongst the people, partly owing to its obvious exaggeration and malice, and partly owing to the proper refusal on the part of the French Dominican Fathers and Syrian Catholics to associate themselves in any way with the proclamation against a Mission whose work and methods were spontaneously and genuinely acknowledged to me by the Dominican Fathers at the time of my visit.

The second attack was made more recently by the Turkish Government, who complained that the Mission was doing Christian propagandist work under guise of medical practice.

I do not feel inclined personally to attribute much importance to either of these attacks, and the subject may be dismissed in saying that the first attack was unwarrantable and intolerant and only to be understood by a proper valuation of the scholastic attainments and mental outlook of the Patriarch, whilst the second was a more natural protest emanating originally from the Moslem doctors of the town, who find that Dr. Griffiths has by his medical ability alienated a good deal of their practice; but I am

sincerely convinced after a couple of weeks' personal observation of the work that the Mission has never laid itself open to the charges made against it by the Turkish Government. Any one who is acquainted with Mahommedan countries will readily admit the practical impossibility of making converts from the faith of Islam, and Dr. Griffiths' work lies entirely in giving relief from pain and sickness to all applicants alike and in attempting wherever possible to ameliorate the moral and social lot of those with whom he comes into contact.

I understand, however, that there is a prospect that the Mission may shortly be closed owing to reluctance on the part of the Church Missionary Society to extend the limits of their world's work. I understand that the progress which the Mission has so far made necessitates further expenses being incurred in the way of increased staff and accommodation, and that the Society do not feel themselves financially capable of meeting the additional responsibilities and expenditure which the permanent establishment of a Mission would involve.

It is in this connection, therefore, that it is desirable shortly to review the work accomplished by the Mission during the last two years, and to consider whether any Society should not feel immensely encouraged by the progress made or dare to draw back from a humanitarian work whose unexampled success appears to be the only obstacle to its continuance, when it can be clearly shown that there are few places in the world where such a clear and immense future lies open for medical missionary work.

During the year 1905 no less than 6,213 patients were treated by Dr. Griffiths; 318 patients were visited in the town, of which latter number 103 were Moslems, 190 Christians, and 25 were Jews. As many as 124 operations were performed, and during only four months 44 in-patients were received, of which, again, 18 were Moslems, 19 were Christians, and 7 were Jews. Patients from 84 different towns and villages outside Mosul visited the hospital.

The following year shows something like a 40 per cent. increase over the work of 1905. In 1906 10,760 patients were treated, 211 operations performed, and 101 in-patients received into the hospital. The area of influence was nearly doubled, patients being treated from 156 different towns and villages.

The first six months of this year show a further immense increase of work; 7,546 patients were treated, 234 operations performed, 143 patients taken into the hospital wards, and visits from 108 different towns and villages recorded.

A rough summary of the work from May 1905 to May 1907 shows the following results:—

Total number of out-patients and visits	24,519
Major operations	197
Minor operations	372
Total number of in-patients	288
Total number of towns and villages from which patients have come ..	348

I am aware that statistics can in no way adequately measure the value of the work done, the measure of suffering relieved, or the immense influence for good that has been effected, but those figures can, I submit, be scarcely rivalled by any other Mission of similar standing in the world, and when it is taken into consideration that these results have been achieved by one European doctor with a most inadequate and insufficient staff in a series of tumble-down buildings that are a travesty of the name of hospital, amongst a population of very varied creeds renowned for their suspicions of anything modern or European, I think there can be no question at all that not only does Mesopotamia in general and Mosul in particular provide an exceptional field of work for a British Medical Mission, but that any question of withdrawal from the work so brilliantly begun could not but have a very serious effect upon the British name and influence in Mesopotamia.

From a political point of view, it should be clearly realized that its existence and work is of immense and far-reaching importance. There is probably no man of greater influence in Syria and Palestine than Dr. Stirling, of the British Medical Mission at Gaza, who, by means of his personality and work, is known for hundreds of miles round in the desert. The same may already be said of Dr. Griffiths in his own district, after only two years' work, and the closing of the Mission would undoubtedly have a markedly detrimental effect upon British influence; and should our Mission be replaced, as is not unlikely, by another foreign Mission (*e.g.*, by a German Mission) whose motives would by no means be free from a strong political colouring, it is evident that the pioneer work of Dr. Griffiths, with its far-reaching influence, acquired at the cost of patient labour and

self-sacrifice, would pass into hands whose aims would be tinged with a bias of a political and, in the circumstances, perhaps an anti-British nature.

England is far behind other nations in her mission work in Asiatic Turkey, but in Mesopotamia British interests are important, and amongst foreign nations paramount.

British interests also are destined to rapidly develop or decline in the course of the next decade, in view of the development which promises to open up this country to foreign enterprise and competition, and it seems most inadvisable that such a powerful lever of civilizing and political influence should be thrown aside.

The Mission has now gained the confidence of all classes and creeds. This is clearly shown by the statistics. Patients are coming from all the towns and villages round, sometimes making a ten days' journey to visit the hospital; these return to their distant homes, the majority of them cured, and carry with them the news of kindness shown and relief given by the British Medical Mission. The fact that a large number of the surgical cases are cataract cases serves to make an especial impression upon the mind of the natives, and it is hard to exaggerate the effect produced on a distant community by the return of a comrade with perfect sight who had left them a month earlier totally blind and totally dependent upon the support of others. To any questions or criticisms such a man has but one answer: "One thing only I know: before I was blind, now I see."

If such a small and badly-equipped Mission has succeeded in creating this wide-spread influence in the course of a couple of years, it is not difficult to believe that before very long the British Medical Mission will be found to be doing a widely successful medical and moral work reflecting credit on the British name, and to be in possession of an influence whose political value, especially in a district which is, so to speak, the barrier wall between Indian and Turkish interests, it would be difficult to overrate.

It is this work and this influence which, I submit, should certainly not be allowed to disappear at this juncture, or to fall into the hands of our rivals at a time when the opening up of this vast region is a subject of current politics and actually within sight.

A loss of such influence would be as fatal as it would certainly be irrevocable.

(Signed) GEORGE LLOYD.

[30074] No. 89.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 9.)

(No. 551.)

Sir, *Therapia, September 4, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith an extract from a despatch from the United States' Consul at Harput, which I have received from the United States' Ambassador, dealing with the situation in that vilayet.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR

Inclosure in No. 89.

Mr. E. E. Young to the American Ambassador at Constantinople.

(Extract.) *Harput, August 15, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to submit the following report in reference to the conditions existing in this vilayet:—

The past week has witnessed a steady increase in the general feeling of unrest and insecurity which now pervades the entire district. Robberies have been of frequent occurrence, and the administration seems powerless to prevent a repetition of the same. Several "hold-up's" have occurred during the past few days on the bare outskirts of the city of Harput itself.

The Kurds, in the Dersim district, have been particularly active in their depredations of late, and throughout the entire district there is a well-defined feeling of suspense or fear as to what may happen while this general lawless condition exists.

At Chimisgazek the Kurds were particularly active. The town itself was threatened, stores were closed for a period of nine days, and grave alarm was felt for the safety of the inhabitants of the village.

Considerable excitement was caused this last week by the arrest and imprisonment of some fourteen Armenians, all from a little village a few hours distant from this city. Inasmuch as these men had all, at one time or another, been to the United States and then returned to this country, the report was soon in circulation that the general deportation of all Armenians who had re-entered this country after a residence in some foreign country was to be renewed.

An investigation of the matter soon brought to light the fact that these Armenians had, in some way, incurred the enmity of certain Moslems resident in the same village. The Moslems, as an effective method of getting rid of their enemies, reported to the Government that these Armenians were "revolutionists," that they had lived for a number of years in America, and should be at once sent out of the country. The Vali, without any examination, ordered their deportation, but as my investigation of the case established the fact that eleven of the Armenians were peaceful merchants and farmers in their community, in no wise connected with revolutionists, and that their deportation was desired by these Moslems solely on personal grounds, I deemed it entirely proper for me to use my good offices in the matter. I informed his Excellency that I had good reason to believe that a careful investigation of the case would establish the fact that a deportation of the eleven had been requested on purely personal grounds, and further, that it would appear to me that any renewing of the deportation of Armenians was rather unwise, especially at a time when the general conditions in the vilayet were already far from satisfactory, and when his Excellency was so busy in defending himself against the attacks of his enemies (as he had already told me). His Excellency seemed to agree with me, for a careful examination and investigation of the case was made the same afternoon, with the result that the eleven Armenians mentioned before were immediately released, and returned to their homes.

I am inclined to believe that if the Defterdar and the Inspector of Justice (both bitter enemies of the Vali) were dismissed from office, or transferred to some other vilayet, that the conditions throughout the vilayet would immediately improve. As it is at present, the Vali is hampered in every move he makes by the machinations of his enemies, and it is difficult to judge just what the character of his administration might be were he not handicapped by the enmity of his officials.

I am watching the conditions here carefully, and shall keep the Embassy fully informed in regard to the same.

[30076] No. 90.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received September* 9.)

(No. 553.)

Sir, *Constantinople, September* 4, 1907.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 444 of the 24th July, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Hodeida, reporting on the situation in the Yemen.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 90.

Vice-Consul Richardson to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 59.)

Sir, *Hodeida, August* 9, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to report the movements of troops and transports in this district as follows:—

1. The transport "Assyr" arrived here from Constantinople on the 2nd instant, calling at Camaran *en route*, where she discharged about 150 tons of coal. The vessel embarked 1,780 time-expired men the same evening, and sailed again the next morning for Beyrout.

2. The transport "Termizghan" arrived on the 8th instant from Constantinople, bringing 1,500 recruits for the Yemen Army Corps that she took on board at Smyrna

Three hundred of the above soldiers will be transported this evening by means of "sambooks" (sailing-boats) to Loheia, whence they will be moved in the direction of Hajjeh to strengthen the battalion stationed there. Five hundred more of these drafts are under orders to proceed to Sana'a in the course of the next few days.

The "Termizghan" also brought the members of a Commission from Constantinople to investigate Yemen affairs, consisting of General Sabit Pasha, President, and Majors-General Mustapha and Yussuf Pashas and Hajee Ibrahim Najmuddin Effendi as members.

It is expected that the Commission, that has received no definite instructions so far as to its duties, will be stationed permanently at Hodeida for the purpose of controlling the finances of this vilayet.

The deputation of Arab Sheikhs and Ulemas, representing the Arab tribesmen that proceeded to Constantinople some two months ago, returned to Hodeida by the above-mentioned transport.

These Sheikhs appear highly gratified with their visit to the capital and with the kindness shown them by the Sultan, who has decorated all of them, and bestowed rank and high honours on some of their party.

Amongst the latter might be mentioned the name of Hizam-es-Sa'ar, Sheikh of Amran, who has been created a Pasha, and who, it might be remembered, during the Turkish operations against the Imam in the winter of 1905, in spite of having previously tendered his submission to Fezi Pasha, who appointed him Kaimakam of Amran, led a flying column of 400 men and 4 guns, with a convoy of 200 camels of ammunition, into a trap in the mountains north of Sana'a and caused their entire extermination, including their Commander, Major-General Riza Pasha, and the capture of the guns and ammunition by the rebels.

Sherif Ahmed-bin-Hussain, a Sheikh of Sabyieh, in the Beni Marwan country, who had been arrested for debt shortly prior to his selection on the deputation to the Palace, has been similarly honoured by bestowal of the rank of Pasha.

Some of the Sheikhs that belong to the Ta'iz Sanjak included in the deputation are representative of the tribesmen of their district, and one or two of the Sana'a Sheikhs are fairly influential persons.

On the whole, the deputation cannot be considered as anything like representative of the Yemen population, and its members in no wise voice the opinions of the Imam, although its Zeidi element must have obtained the consent of their leader, Syyed Yahya, to proceed to Constantinople.

The general opinion up at Sana'a is rather pessimistic as to the outcome of the negotiations with the Palace, which, in the end, will most probably lead to nothing.

On the other hand, the Imam, who has been inactive for some time and irresponsible for the raids of his adherents into various quarters during the past three months, might now be induced to muster his clans and show his hand, unless effective measures are promptly taken by the Turks to postpone the inevitable general rising in this province.

The mutinous conduct of the troops throughout the vilayet is still a source for great concern and uneasiness on the part of the authorities.

Recent events have clearly demonstrated that the Yemen soldiers, who in former years used to swear by Fezi Pasha, have now no respect for their once beloved and distinguished leader, and that the days of the veteran Field-Marshal are numbered in Yemen, where nearly thirty or forty years of his best service have been passed.

There have been rumours for some little time past that considerable reinforcements will soon be sent out here, but mobilization in the Turkish provinces for the Yemen Vilayet has already proved to be a most difficult task, and it is not likely that the "saraskaryet" will be roused from its lethargy till the eleventh hour.

Should there be any truth in the above, I think that the Sultan would be well advised if he sent out a new Commander-in-chief, in place of Fezi Pasha, with the fresh troops, to revive the traditional spirit of loyalty of his soldiers to their Padishah and Caliph, which their recent conduct cannot but give one the impression has quite died out.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. A. RICHARDSON.

[30320] No. 91.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 10.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of telegrams relative to affairs of the Aden Protectorate.

India Office, September 9, 1907.

Inclosure 1 in No. 91.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P. *August 31, 1907.*

WITHDRAWAL of Political Officer, Dthala. Your telegram of the 28th instant. We received draft Agreements from the Government of Bombay on the 9th August, and they were forwarded to you with our Secretary's letter of the 15th August. It was necessary to consult army and finance authorities, as grants of money and arms and the construction and demolition of forts were concerned. Subject to the proviso at the end of your telegram of the 1st August and to the following modifications, we have sanctioned drafts of the Agreements:—

First Modification.—The wording of clause 7 of all three Agreements should be so altered as to correspond exactly with the wording of clause 1 of the latest Treaties with Dthala and Aulaki.

Second.—The stipends to be entered in clause 8 of all three Agreements should be those which are specified in our despatch of the 25th April last.

Third.—The proposals contained in the third, fourth, and fifth paragraphs of the letter of the Bombay Government of the 5th August last are accepted.

We have now communicated to the Bombay Government the instructions conveyed in your telegrams of the 28th and 29th instant. We would submit that no delay beyond that which was necessarily involved in the preparation by local officers of the Agreements and the consideration of the drafts here. The Bombay Government were of opinion, as stated in our telegram of the 15th instant, that, until Agreements were completed, it was most inadvisable to move, and we felt, having regard to the important character of Agreements as affecting the future peace of the roads and country, that it was undesirable to press them to evacuate Dthala without, if possible, concluding Agreements.

Inclosure 2 in No. 91.

Mr. Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, September 3, 1907.*

ADEN. Your telegram of the 31st ultimo. In order to avoid fresh obligations on tribes or matters likely to creat intertribal disputes, the first five Articles of the Agreements must be considered in connection with instructions conveyed in my telegram of the 28th August. It is required in these five Articles that assistance shall be given to all travellers, compensation for injuries shall be paid, redress for injuries inflicted outside tribal limits shall be obtained; they also formally recognize that demand may be made for redress from other Chiefs. I cannot approve of the increased interference and responsibilities which must be involved in these Articles. The drafts, in these circumstances, must be remodelled. They should commence with preamble to following effect:—

"With a desire of maintaining and strengthening the relations of peace and friendship existing between them, and of providing for the safety of the roads, the British Government and Chief of ——— agree as follows:—"

First Article should then be seventh Article of drafts, which should be modified, as proposed by you, on model of the Dthala Treaty of 1905.

The first five Articles of drafts should be replaced by a new second Article,

following the wording of the fifth Article of the Dthala Treaty of 1905, and if the tribal Chiefs do not object to the sixth Article of the drafts, that Article may be tacked on to it. The eighth Article of drafts will become the third, and the stipends may be filled in as proposed. The ninth and tenth Articles of the Haushabi and Alawi drafts may stand, and will become fifth and sixth Articles.

As regards the terms of the Kotaibi Agreement, they must obviously not go beyond the terms of the other Agreements as modified by me, and the ninth Article, being clearly contentious, must be omitted, the arrangement as to payment being left for settlement independently of the Agreement. To the tenth and eleventh Articles there is no objection. I agree to the Government of Bombay's proposals of the 5th August, paragraphs 3 and 4; and, as regards the fifth paragraph, I assume that the Political Agent will, if the tribes are willing, at once conclude these arrangements, and, if they are not willing, he will withdraw, reserving the points in dispute for future settlement.

Inclosure 3 in No. 91.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P. *September 7, 1907.*

WE repeat for information following telegram, dated the 4th instant, from Resident at Aden:—

"Instructions sent to Jacob to ascertain informally whether Chiefs are willing to execute amended Agreements which have been sent to him; he is to conclude Agreements if acceptable to Chiefs. As to exact date of leaving Dthala, though I am anxious to effect early withdrawal, I would ask to be allowed to use my discretion, as we have delayed so long. Any appearance of undue precipitation is, in my opinion, undesirable. Advisability at this season of what was advisable in February last does not necessarily follow. Collection of carriage is necessary, and extra 300 men cannot be accommodated at Aden. Medical authorities rightly, in my opinion, object to tents in this great heat. Effect of our withdrawal would in the meantime be minimized by arrangements proposed in my No. 4998 of the 11th ultimo, and much would be done to facilitate subsequent arrangements. Pending further orders, I therefore propose to withdraw Political Agent to Nobat about end of September, withdrawing his escort to Aden for embarkation to India the 11th October, but leaving Nobat with its present garrison."

Orders contained in your telegram of the 3rd instant about Agreements, which were repeated to Resident for guidance on the 4th instant, had not been received by him when he sent this telegram. Definition of limit within which internal disturbances will call for interposition (see your despatch of the 4th May, 1906, paragraph 3) and of reorganization of Aden troop for the purpose of policing area within the limit are the subjects referred to by proposals in Resident's letter of the 11th ultimo. Bombay Government has not yet considered these proposals, and delay of Political Agent's withdrawal pending their consideration is evidently impossible in view of your instructions; we think it reasonable, however, in circumstances stated, that period till end of September to complete withdrawal should be allowed Political Agent, and that he should be permitted to make his head-quarters at Nobat, British garrison being retained there pending consideration of Resident's proposals of the 11th ultimo. We propose, subject to your consent, to instruct him accordingly, and to approve suggestion as to escort departing in October from Aden.

[30595] No. 92.

Mr. Ramsay to Foreign Office.—(Received September 12.)

Dear Mr. Montgomery, *Aberdeen, September 11, 1907.*

I HAVE learned only to-day who are the two banks that have undertaken to finance the railway from Tripolis to Homs. They are the Deutsche Bank and the Dresdner Bank. Three weeks ago the Moslem Company, Ezzedine and Co., deposited in the Ottoman Bank their share of the price of the Concession, viz., 20,000*l.* out of 40,000*l.* The German banks have not kept their engagement to do the same, and I believe that they took up the affair only to prevent it from falling into the hands of a

rival, who might build the railway, which would be a most serious danger to their own extension of the Mersina–Adana Railway to Aleppo. Tripolis will easily be made the best sea end of the Syrian railways, and the short railway—80 kilom.—is easy and cheap. The total capital needed for construction and working is only 320,000*l.*, estimated by a good Scotch engineer. The Moslems offer to put up half the capital (or a good deal more than half, if they can get an English registered Company to take up the business). The engineer, Skinner, gives them a very high character for straightforward dealing, and says they have plenty of money, but they want English associates and English protection.

As I mentioned to you, I was under the impression that the enterprise had been taken up in London, until I went to town last week. Then I learned that a German named Ducker, of Frankfurt, representing two banks, was the person who had taken up the enterprise, and that the Preliminary Agreement had been signed, and the Moslems had deposited at once their half of the Concession money needed in Constantinople. The Germans made a condition that they should get the whole of the debenture issue, 100,000*l.*, 6 per cent. at 80, the balance of the total capital, viz., 220,000*l.*, to be issued in ordinary shares.

The matter now stands in that condition.

The Moslems had at first stipulated that no Germans should be allowed in, as they distrust the Germans and dislike them, and now, as things are, they think that the stipulation was a wise one.

The railway is one that must be made some time; Nature wills it so. The enterprise is one of great possibilities.

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) W. M. RAMSAY.

[29280] No. 93.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 376.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 12, 1907.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 538 respecting the deplorable condition of the Armenian population in the Bitlis Vilayet, and reporting the representations which you had addressed to the Grand Vizier on the subject.

Your Excellency's language on this occasion is entirely approved by His Majesty's Government.

In view of the continued decrease in the number of independent farmers, I have to instruct you to make special representations to the Grand Vizier with a view to a remission of taxation in the district.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

[30703] No. 94.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received September 13.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 10th instant, relative to affairs of the Aden Protectorate.

India Office, September 13, 1907.

Inclosure in No. 94.

Mr. Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, September* 10, 1907.

ADEN. Your telegram of the 7th instant.

It is not apparent to me why consideration of questions as to the limit of active interference cannot be carried on at Aden, nor why it is necessary to detain Agent at Nobat, and retain garrison there for that purpose. You will, of course, proceed with the Agreements on the instructions telegraphed by me on the 3rd instant. For the completion of these Agreements as well as on grounds of heat, I concur in thinking that a period till the end of the month may be allowed for withdrawal. It will be necessary to refer to me the arrangements for maintaining order within the limit, and they will require very careful consideration hereafter.

[30901] No. 95.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 16.)

(No. 563.)
Sir, *Therapia, September* 10, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a carefully and ably prepared Report by Mr. Vice-Consul Heard on the condition of the Mush district, which discloses a deplorable state of things as regards the oppression of the Christian population.

It is, I fear, not humanly possible to make the life of the weak Armenian element tolerable, placed as it is in the midst of strong hostile races which detest it, and are resolved to exterminate it sooner or later, but I trust I am anticipating the wishes of His Majesty's Government in endeavouring to bring about some alleviation of the misery of these unhappy people.

I have secured from the Grand Vizier a promise that he will carefully study a précis of Mr. Heard's Report which I am preparing for his Excellency, and that he will give effect as far as possible to the proposals described in the postscript to the Report for the removal of the most crying abuses. I learn meanwhile that, in pursuance of the resolution reported at the end of my despatch No. 538 of the 29th ultimo, twenty-six of the leading Kurds have been removed from the Mush district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 95.

Vice-Consul Heard to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 3.)
Sir, *Bitlis, August* 16, 1907.

IN accordance with the instructions contained in your Excellency's telegram of the 17th July I have the honour to report as follows on the present position in Mush. In submitting this Report I would beg your Excellency to kindly bear in mind that I had had no previous experience of this district to assist me in its compilation, nor had I had access to the archives of this Vice-Consulate.

My information has been obtained from the following sources:—

(Confidential.)

1. The Bishops of Surp Garabed Monastery and of Mush.
2. The Secretary of the latter, who has kept a detailed register of all the events in Mush affecting the Armenian population for the last fifteen years. I believe his information to be trustworthy and accurate on the whole.
3. From Petitions from—

(*a.*) The Bishops above mentioned;

(*b.*) From Armenian villages (amongst these there is one from twenty-three villages, with an aggregate population of over 9,000);

(*c.*) From individual Armenians.

4. The inhabitants of nineteen villages which I visited.
5. Official and Moslem sources.
6. The revolutionaries.

I have thus been enabled to compare and check the information obtained from a variety of sources, and I have found that the various authorities vary surprisingly little in their accounts of the events they narrate and in their description of the general situation. Exception must, of course, be made for my Turkish informants, who in most cases spoke with intent to mislead.

Chronicle of Events since Sulukh.

The present troubles started with the fight at Sulukh, of which I presume your Excellency has already been informed. Accounts vary as to the details, but I believe the following brief account to be fairly correct. On the 9th June, at 4 P.M., the village was attacked by troops and Bashi-Bozouks. The revolutionaries, of whom there were fifteen (this number is confirmed by the revolutionaries themselves), lost three killed, including their Chief, Kevork. Of the soldiers, the bimbashi was killed and six others were buried in Mush. Other soldiers appear to have been killed and buried elsewhere. The revolutionaries say they accounted for over forty.

The villagers fled during the fight, and five of them were killed and four wounded by the Bashi-Bozouks under Abdurrahim Bey, of Mush. The latter also killed two villagers of Akhjan and wounded two others in the neighbourhood. Names of killed are recorded. Six children were accidentally drowned in crossing the river. The Turks say the revolutionaries numbered about forty. The authorities make great capital out of the story of a secret chamber discovered here, which they say contained rifles, stores, clothing, papers, &c., thus proving the complicity of the villagers. The truth appears to be that the Fedais hid some of their belongings in a well, where they were found after the combat.

Four women are generally stated to have been raped (names recorded).

June 10. *Tzronk* (200 *houses*).—Attacked by twenty Kurds of Khedjeh under Seyido-i-Yussuf and his henchman, Amero. Five villagers killed (names recorded). Stock robbed.

Shaikh Yussuf.—Attacked by Zoravi Kurds. One killed, two wounded (names recorded).

June 13. *Kharanish* (?).—One killed (name recorded).

June 20. *Mush Bazaar looted.*—The bazaars had been closed since Sulukh (9th June), as inhabitants feared a massacre owing to the excitement of the Moslems. The Mutessarif prevailed on the Armenians to open their shops, which they did on the 17th June on the advice of the Bishop. Three days later some time-expired soldiers raided the market at 2 A.M. The Armenians maintain that they had arranged the attack to take place two hours later in company with some "Jan Bozar" Kurds, but that they, fortunately, began too soon. Nine persons were reported to me as having been wounded, but my Russian colleague believes there were rather more, and that several have since died. A panic ensued. Shops were shut and churches and schools closed until the 27th June, when the authorities prevailed on the Armenians to reopen the bazaars.

June 27. *Baghlou.*—Attacked by Kurds of Kalajik. Inhabitants fled. Houses pillaged and eight burnt. Eight men who had fled from Hergerd were discovered near Baghlou and shot (names recorded). The bodies were brought to Mush in triumph as Fedai, after they had been decorated with cartridges, &c. I am inclined to believe that one of them had a gun when they were found, but think it untrue that they were revolutionaries.

I visited this village on the 30th July and found the houses swept bare of everything, the church ransacked (it had been cleaned since its defilement), and eight houses burnt. A woman and two girls are said to have died of starvation, but the villagers now have a little grain.

Six hundred and thirty live-stock looted, 206 restored by Government.

The villagers looked very wretched, and lived in a state of continual fear.

June 28. *Nargdi.*—One man killed, two wounded, by Belbash Kurds (names recorded).

Two mares stolen were restored by Government.

Hergerd.—Village looted. Inhabitants escaped.

Very little remained in the houses, which were, however, not absolutely swept bare, as at Baghlou. Probably the inhabitants had borrowed utensils from neighbouring villages.

June 30. *Göd.*—Two Mush butchers murdered (names recorded).

July 3. *Pitar.*—Surrounded during the night as it contained Fedai. Next morning there was a fight and three Fedais were killed (names recorded).

The villagers fled, and the village was looted of everything, down to beds and dishes.

One hundred sheep, sixty oxen, and three buffaloes were robbed. Government has since restored twenty sheep and four oxen.

July 15.—*Marnik.*—A priest of Khars village (name, Ghazar) murdered by Kurds of Marnik on his way to administer sacraments at another village. A rifle was put with the body to prove that he was Fedai.

July 12.—*Zehdv.*—Two Christians (names recorded) killed in the fields by Circassians, who took their cattle. Bodies brought to Mush authorities, but no attention was paid.

July 17.—*Arakh.*—Boghos Minoyan killed by soldiers outside village.

August 3.—A rich Armenian of Mush, Krikor Aga Kotchoyan, killed by four Circassians on his way to Boulanik with a caravan.

List of Villages.	Killed.	Wounded.
Sulukh	5	6
Tzronk	6	..
Shaikh Yussuf	1	2
Akjan	2	..
Khars	2	..
Erishter	1	..
Hergerd	8	..
Mogdi	1	2
Zekav	2	..
Akhjan	2	..
Kharozich [?]	1	..
Göd	2	..
Arakh	1	..
Others (approximate)	4	9
Total	38	19

The above are all the casualties which have been brought to my notice, but there may have been a few others.

On the whole, it is surprising that the Sulukh incident was not followed by more serious consequences, as I have not yet heard that the Government took any serious steps to protect the Armenians from the Kurds, who had, and still have, a free hand to rob and kill at their pleasure. Only four villages appear to have been looted, and eight women raped (names recorded).

Miserable Condition of Mush Armenians.

On the other hand, the general condition of the Mush Armenians appears to be one of complete misery and subjection, with no hope of alleviation from their oppression. The Government would seem hitherto to have done its best to carry out to the bitter end its intention of breaking the small vestige of spirit which may survive among this wretched people, and placing them once and for all under the heel of their Kurdish masters. Overburdened by excessive taxation, in debt to the "selefdars," obliged to pay whatever they may be asked for fear of being denounced as revolutionaries, and seeing their land unlawfully seized by Beys and Agas, they are bound to become the bondslaves of their oppressors or leave their homes and go elsewhere. From an unexpected Turkish source I heard that the local authorities had had instructions to continue to repress the Armenians and deny them justice, and that, consequently, any promises of reform they might give were not seriously meant. This would appear to be true of past Administrations; as to the intentions of the present Vali I am not yet in a position to give an opinion.

Fiscal Abuses.—Extortions of Tahsildars.

The abuses for which the Armenians suffer fall under two heads—fiscal and political.

In the collection of taxes the Tahsildars stick at nothing in extorting the uttermost farthing from the villagers. Your Excellency is doubtless acquainted with some of their methods. They are actively supported by the zaptiehs or soldiers who accompany them on their expeditions. The latter naturally help themselves to anything they require in the villages. The sums they collect for themselves in addition to the legal dues are

only limited by their ingenuity in devising means for extortion. They sometimes even refuse to give receipts, and subsequently deny that these payments have been made. They will also sell the cattle of a man who has paid his full share to make up the deficit of those who have not been able to meet their liabilities.

The military exemption tax, being assessed according to the supposed total male population of a village, falls only on a certain number of the inhabitants, who must pay for orphans, the destitute, and emigrants, which latter, I believe, should not be included in the taxable community.

The Tithes.

The tithes formerly collected by the "multezims," or tax-farmers, are now to be paid, in accordance with a recent Iradé, by the villagers themselves. The Reises of villages are now being summoned to Mush and Bitlis for the assessment of the tithes, calculated on the average paid during the last five years. At first sight this appears an admirable measure, as the irregularities of the "multezims" will thus be put a stop to. On examination, however, it will be seen that the incidence bears heavily on the majority of villages, where the number of farmers has steadily decreased during the last five years. To take two instances:—

THE VILLAGE OF ARKAVANK.

Year.	Houses.	Farmers.	Tithes.
			Piastres.
1903	53	50	12,000
1904	53	50	10,800
1905	10	7	8,700
1906	10	7	6,500
1907	10	6	9,500

THE VILLAGE OF ERISHTER.

1903	60	[illegible]	15,000
1904	55	45	13,000
1905	35	30	12,000
1906	25	20	24,000
1907	21	7	19,000

The above figures, as regards the totals for tithes, have been confirmed by the Mush Government and by the villagers themselves. The following figures from thirteen Armenian villages were collected from the inhabitants themselves, and may, I believe, be considered as fairly accurate:—

Number of farmers six years ago	761
Present number	174
Decrease	587

Fifty-nine Kurdish farmers have been settled in these villages, which were selected at haphazard.

The following I obtained from another trustworthy source:—

	1903.	1907.
Moghunk	14 farmers	2 farmers.
Sokhkon	23 ,,	7 ,,
Arinjvank	40 ,,	3 ,,
Total	77 ,,	12 ,,

Showing a decrease of sixty-five in five years.

In Diarbekir the system obtains of assessing the tithes on the number of kiles of wheat sown, which would appear to be far more equitable.

Selefdarlik.

Selefdarlik is a kind of usuary by which the peasants raise money to pay their taxes by mortgaging their crops or live-stock.

Thus a kile of wheat is sold beforehand to a selefdar for 25 to 40 piastres, though at harvest time it is worth 100 to 140 piastres. A lamb is sold on the same principle for 20 piastres and must be kept by the owner until the ensuing spring, when it is delivered to the selefdar, being then worth 50 piastres. If the debtor cannot pay his due, he must give double the next year, or four times the value the third year.

In some villages from 300 to 600 kiles of grain are said to be taken annually by the selefdars.

This system has now been forbidden by the Provincial Government, but it will probably be very hard to eradicate. The Mutessarif of Mush told me that a Mixed Commission (Christian and Moslem) had already been formed to examine the accounts of selefdars and reduce the interest now due to them to a reasonable rate. It appears, however, that the Commission as yet exists only in his Excellency's brain, though the Vali assures me that it will be formed. If free from undesirable influences it should do valuable work.

The Agricultural Bank.

I failed while in Mush to ascertain why the peasantry did not apply to the Agricultural Bank for loans instead of the selefdars, but it was not until I questioned the villagers themselves that I discovered what I believed to be the true reasons. Before a loan is granted the petitioner must apply successively to the Mutessarif, the "Emlak," the accounts department, and finally to the bank. In each department the smaller officials demand their share of backsheesh, and before a villager can obtain a loan of, say £T. 20, he must expend £T. 5 in bribes. Moreover, the "Emlak" may assess the value of the land pledged as security at half the right amount, and the villager must wait several weeks in Mush to see the business through. After he has at last got the money it is liable to be seized by the selefdar to whom he is indebted. It is not surprising, then, that he applies to the selefdar, who requires no such formalities. The bank on its part says that the villagers prefer not to pay the interest due, and that generally the land has to be seized and sold after the legal period of ten years has expired.

The Mudir of the bank at Mush informed me that it has a capital of £T. 25,000, nearly all of which is employed in districts other than Mush, which is an unnatural state of affairs.

Arrears of Taxes.

I propose suggesting to the Vali that the villagers should be permitted to apply direct to the bank, that some supervision should be exercised over the proceedings of the "Emlak," and that the bank should send its agents round every year to press for the payment of interest, which the villagers, in the absence of reminders, appear to be too improvident to trouble about.

I have obtained the following figures from what I believe to be a reliable source:—

	£T.
Arrears for Bitlis Sandjak	25,000
,, Mush ,, ...	30,000
,, Sert ,, ...	15,000
,, Guenj ,, ...	5,000
Total	75,000

I would venture to say that, as far as the Mush Sanjak is concerned, it would still further tend to complete the ruin of the villagers if the exaction of the arrears of taxes were to be rigorously insisted on by Government. Some allowance should at least be made for the villages which are already overburdened with debts.

Suffering of the Villagers.

Overburdened by taxes, owing most of their harvest to the selefdars before it is reaped, robbed indiscriminately by gendarmes, Hamidies, "Jan Bezar," and other nondescript Kurds, and perhaps pillaged now and again, it is not surprising that the

independent farmers are rapidly disappearing from the Mush Plain. Amongst other exactions I have omitted to mention the "Var Sorma" tax, which is sufficiently explained by its meaning: "Give and ask no questions." It may be levied by any one who has sufficient power to demand it.

As the Armenian farmer disappears the Kurdish landowner takes his place. It is often unnecessary to inquire into the condition of a village. The house of the Bey or Aga may be seen from a long distance, dominating, with its two or three stories, the miserable huts of the peasants, most of whom are literally his bondslaves. It is true he affords them a measure of protection, and it would seem that it is not until he has sunk to this level that the Armenian peasant can enjoy any degree of security.

The remarkable decrease in the numbers of the Mush farmers gives rise to the question: How do the remainder of the population who still cling to their villages manage to exist? It appears that many live on the charity of their more fortunate neighbours. Some beg, others wander about in search of employment, or work for the Kurdish landowners; many of them are ragged and look half starved. When the stock of grain is exhausted, they subsist on various herbs and two kinds of seed, known collectively as "panjar." Of these seeds, which do not look very nourishing, they make a kind of bread. It would hardly be possible to find a more striking example of the ill-effects of Turkish maladministration, when one considers that an industrious population, living in the midst of a plain of extraordinary fertility, is reduced to such expedients to maintain life.

Villages occupied by Selefdars.

I have a list of thirty-two villages whose lands are more or less in the hands of the selefdars, whose names are recorded. Most of them are Mush Notables. It is probable that any attempt at fiscal reform will be strongly opposed by this gentry.

Villages occupied by Beys and Agas.

I have a further list of forty-five villages partly or entirely occupied by Kurdish Beys and Agas, many of whom are however selefdars, so that the two lists coincides to some extent. Nine of these are in Boulanik.

Mohadjirs.

Few Mohadjirs, or Moslem immigrants, as yet appear to have been settled in the Mush Plain. I have only been given the names of seven villages in this connection, though I myself saw some Mohadjirs in several other villages towards the eastern extremity of the plain. They appear to be plentiful in other districts, notably Boulanik. The Director of Passports told me that 2,000 came from Russia last year. It appears that they are generally settled on the farms of "Nakl-khanés," or people who have emigrated.

These lists do not pretend to be exhaustive. It should be borne in mind that nearly all the land thus filched from its former owners, who still pay the "Tenciluat" for it, is not legally held by the present occupiers, to whom the "Tapous," or title-deeds, have not been transferred. It would still be possible, therefore, to reinstate the original owners if they could be freed from debt, and to set them on their feet once more. A Commission appointed to inquire into the economic condition of the Mush villagers, to remit arrears of taxes, reduce their indebtedness to the selefdars, and confirm them in the possession of their fields, might even now save them from utter ruin.

Political Abuses.

Under the head of "Political Abuses," I would include the various kinds of oppression from which the Armenians suffer, and which are traceable, directly or indirectly, to the hostile attitude of the Government authorities towards them.

Kurdish Oppression.

The free hand given to the Kurds to rob, oppress, and kill their Armenian fellow-subjects, would seem to be the result of the tacit encouragement of the Government. For the Kurd there is no punishment, for the Armenian there is no redress. Consequently, the

country is being reduced to a state of insecurity bordering on anarchy. The predatory instincts of the Kurds once aroused, they naturally take full advantage of the liberty accorded them, and of the hopeless condition of the Christians. The Armenians now find it impossible to leave their villages, even to gather their harvest, without having previously subsidized some influential Kurd to guarantee their safety. Even so they consider it dangerous to wander too far a-field, and are often accompanied by a Kurdish protector if they wish to go to the town from a long distance. Various murders of inoffensive Armenians found outside their villages have been reported to me. The chief victims are priests and village Reises or Kehias, of whom a great number have been killed of late years. The Priest of Tzronk told me that he had not dared to visit the nearest village, about a mile distant, even to bury the dead for many months.

It appears to be a common practice amongst the Kurds to demand grain from the villages under threat of denouncing them as "Fedais." As the Government lends a ready ear to such accusations, and anything the villagers may say carries little weight, the latter are forced to put up with these impositions.

"Jan Bezars."

The "Jan Bezars" appear to be specially addicted to such practices. The "Jan Bezars" (officially called Seyarés") are a body of men specially created for the tracking down and destruction of the "Jan Fedai," or revolutionaries. The name implies one who sacrifices his soul in the pursuit of his object. There are four companies, and their officers are appointed from the regular forces. Their distinctive mark is a "nishan" of red braid on their backs. They receive no training, and in spite of the official fiction that they are an organized force, I believe them to be nothing more than licensed Bashi-Bozouks. The Ferik, whom I questioned about them, seemed uneasy, denied that such a force existed, and adroitly changed the subject to "Jan d'Armas," with whom, he said, I must be confusing them.

They have permission to attack the "Fedais" wherever found, without asking for instructions from head-quarters, as gendarmes and troops are supposed to do. It may be easily imagined what a danger these undisciplined levies must constitute to the villagers. Apparently there is nothing to prevent them from swooping down on a village, on pretence that it contains revolutionaries, searching the houses with the usual accompaniment of ill-usage and robbery, and denouncing some inoffensive person as a "Fedai" as an excuse for their incursion, or in order to acquire merit for themselves. Their disbandment would seem a matter of urgent necessity, if all I hear of them is true.

Oppression of Beys and Agas.

Many villages suffer in particular from the oppression of certain Beys and Agas notorious for their harshness and cruelty. I have been given a list of five with a few instances of their misdoings, which I have not been in a position to verify, though I consider that my information is probably correct. I have heard many complaints against one specially, a certain Hadji Faris, of Kolosik, whose misdoings I will report to your Excellency as typical of the kind of oppression indulged in by others. He has occupied nearly all the lands of Kolosik, and most of those of Khaskeui, Erizag, and Erishter. The second is a large village of 400 houses, the only one I have seen in which the population has increased. Haji Faris has established forty Kurdish families in it to keep it in order, and it promises soon to fall into his hands altogether. Erishter, which I also visited, is coveted by him, and he is making life so impossible for the villagers that they state their intention of deserting the village after harvest. The Erishterlis pay "temettuat" for the soil on which he sows his corn.

The following murders are attributed to him: the brother of the Reis of Erishter and a farmer murdered in cold blood this year by Hadji Faris' followers. Three Reises and one priest of Khaskeui, two Reises of Alvarinj, a priest of Shemlag, two men of Megrakos, and one of Erizag (all names recorded).

Kurdish Robbers.

In addition to the oppressive Beys, already referred to, the people suffer greatly from the excesses of various Kurdish chieftains and bandits, who kill, rob, burn, and sometimes occupy the fields of the peasants. Of these I have a list of twenty-two, with an

account of their misdeeds. Apart from other considerations it is to be presumed that the Imperial Government would be glad to see the country rid of these malefactors in its own interests.

Forced Labour.

Another grievance of the Armenians is that of forced labour. The road tax in this vilayet is fixed at 12 piastres, in lieu of which the tax-payer may work for four days on the roads. This period is frequently extended to as much as twelve days, and the carts of the peasants are commandeered for indefinite periods. The Kurds also frequently compel the villagers to gather their harvest and transport their grain for nothing.

Mush Prison.

The disgraceful state of the prison at Mush is a matter which urgently requires attention. In an unguarded moment the Mutessarif granted me permission to visit the prison house which, I believe, is an unprecedented occurrence here. The appalling state of things revealed by my inspection surpassed even the accounts I had heard of this dreadful place. The space in which the 308 prisoners are confined occupies half the ground floor of the barracks, which in themselves are a disgrace to a divisional head-quarters. The prison is subdivided into a central chamber opening into eight other compartments containing each from twenty-three to twenty-seven inmates, who, when lying down, occupy the entire floor space, with the exception of a filthy gutter running down the middle. These rooms, at any rate, have windows, but the central chamber is almost pitch dark, having no window or ventilator of any kind. In this "black hole" are herded over 100 wretched beings, crowded together on the filthy mud floor and breathing an atmosphere which it would be impossible to describe. The worst feature of all, however, was that the sick were lying about pell mell amongst their fellow prisoners, who could scarcely allow them the necessary space to stretch their limbs. I counted from twenty-five to twenty-seven (it was hard to distinguish many of them in the darkness), and I was assured that the majority were suffering from typhoid. It is not surprising that the mortality of the Mush prison is high. I was informed that they received medical attendance, but what medicines and nourishment they were given I cannot say. To add to the torments of the sick a military band plays discordant music for the delectation of the Ferik at intervals during the day and sometimes during the night, within a few yards of the prison windows. The prison ration consists of 400 grammes of bread which appears to be of fair quality. The prisoners' friends are allowed to bring them food. I observed a large proportion of priests, and am informed that 200 of the prisoners are Armenians.

I spoke strongly to the Mutessarif, who admitted that the prison was a disgrace, and expressed his regret that I had not given them time to clean it up a little for my benefit. At my request he agreed to have the sick collected into one of the side rooms, and I was afterwards informed that two had been set apart for them. He also promised to have them removed to another house after a few days. He spoke enthusiastically of the splendid prison that was to be built next year, and when I observed that most of the prisoners would be dead before then, he replied that "these people are very tough." As some of them have existed there for nine years, he spoke with truth. A military hospital is under construction at Mush, and I was told that thirty beds would be set apart for the prisoners. Later, I was informed that sixty prisoners were to be removed to Cueni. It is to be hoped that the accommodation there will meet this influx.

If I may be permitted to speak on such a subject to your Excellency, I would humbly venture to suggest that if money is available from any relief fund, it could hardly be employed to better advantage than in providing medical necessities for the sick of Mush prison.

The administration of justice at Mush also leaves much to be desired. The great majority of the prisoners are as yet untried, and are, I believe, in many cases incarcerated on the flimsiest charges of complicity with the revolutionaries. After the preliminary investigation, a perfectly innocent person may be imprisoned for an indefinite period pending the return of some witness who has gone to another vilayet and may never return. I understood the Mutessarif to say that only four of the 308 prisoners had been tried and condemned, but this statement seems so incredible that on subsequent consideration I concluded that he must have misunderstood my question. A visit from the judicial inspector is urgently required at Mush.

I hope to obtain shortly a list of the prisoners, with the nature of the charges against them and the number of those who have been condemned, when I shall be in a better position to report to your Excellency on this subject.

I venture respectfully to ask of your Excellency that should any use be made of the above information, the fact of my having entered the prison may not be mentioned, as the Mutessarif, after allowing my visit, discovered that he had thereby infringed an Iradé, and begged that I would not mention it as it might cause his dismissal.

Fugitives.

A large number of villagers, variously estimated at from 200 to 300, are now leading the lives of outlaws in the mountains. They are known as "Firars" and the Turks generally class them all as rebels. I am convinced, however, that the great majority were originally innocent men, who finding life on the plain intolerable had fled to avoid a worse fate. Almost every village I visited reported that some of its members had become "Firar," the general reason being that they feared to be denounced as "Fedai" and ran away to escape the imprisonment which they knew awaited them. That some of these men, perhaps many, have since joined the revolutionaries is not surprising, as they must live somehow, and the assistance of the professional "Fedai" would naturally be welcome.

In my humble opinion, if the Government were to offer a free pardon to all persons, either fugitives or prisoners, who are at present accused of complicity with the revolutionaries, it would greatly tend to restore confidence to a population which has been driven to regard emigration as its only hope.

Petitions.

During my stay in Mush I received a large number of petitions, chiefly from the villages of the plain, describing their suffering and begging for my help. It would be impossible to quote them *in extenso*, nor indeed would it seem necessary, as the persecutions of which they complain are common to all and are for the most part referred to in the foregoing pages of this Report. Had I not visited many of the villages myself, I could hardly have believed that these statements of their conditions were not considerably exaggerated, but from personal observation I am compelled to say that, except in certain matters of detail, they have not overstated their case.

The most remarkable of these documents was a petition to His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Bitlis dated the 20th May.* It is noteworthy that it was not called forth by the events succeeding the Sulukh incident, which occurred some three weeks later, and was accordingly merely the outcome of the normal state of oppression from which the villagers have been suffering for a long time past. It is signed by representatives of the following villages, the Armenian population of each being stated:—

Derkavank	450	Alijan	400
Alizernan	200	Hertel	300
Pertag	800	Akhpan	160
Havaderig	600	Tevnik	80
Moghunk	250	Sheikh Yussuf	120
Garni	800	Teernak	600
Dzapna	100	Hatzag	50
Arinj	400	Hanan . ..	220
Soglkon	850	Pekle	100
Khavkeui	2,150	Khasikhaldagh	150
Kerdakos	300	Khoper	100

In all a population of 9,780.

In this petition it is requested that the miseries and woes of the Armenians may be represented to the British Government in whom they still hope, though the petitioners observe that the interference of the Powers has not hitherto diminished their oppression in the least. They have long been patient hoping that Christian Europe would do something for them, but now they can bear it no longer and have decided to leave their homes and the tombs of their fathers and flee to Russia or elsewhere. The reasons for this step are then stated in detail, to the number of twenty-eight. The principal are: the oppression of the Moslems who are directly encouraged by Government to kill, rob

* Received by me August 7.

and outrage; forcible conversion to Islam; unjust imprisonment; fiscal abuses; the profits of their toil taken by others; occupation of their pasturages and robbery of live-stock; insecurity and closing of roads to Armenians; occupation of their fields by Beys, &c.; inability of breadwinners who have emigrated to return to sustain their families; no education, &c.

"We are looked on as slaves," they say, "without the right of appeal, and so we are systematically destroyed by the policy of the Government."

Separate petitions were also received from the following villages: Marnik, Ternerd, Arkavank, Erishter, Tzronk, Koms, Ziaret, Baghlou, Gôd, Sulukh, Alijan, Khars.

These petitions are a little more detailed than the last, and in many cases I heard from the villagers themselves confirmation of the injustices mentioned. The same grievances and sufferings are recorded again and again with monotonous regularity. The histories of many of the villages during the last few years are gloomy reading.

For instance: Ziaret reduced from 160 houses to 70–80. Once rich and flourishing, now miserably poor. It is the head-quarters of a mudir, a police official, a clerk and fifteen zaptiehs, for whom they have to supply food and forage. Each Moslem uses a villager as his domestic servant.

Koms: Once a big village. The lands were coveted by Haji Ali and Ibrahim of Mush. Five years ago a dead Kurd was found near the village, in consequence of which, ten to fifteen villagers were imprisoned, while others fled. Haji Ali was later murdered by a "Firar," in revenge for which his brother Ibrahim robbed and burned the village, and had fifty people imprisoned. Shortly after seven villagers were killed. Ibrahim is now having a large house built out of the materials of the empty houses of the village. The wives of the dead, the Firars and the prisoners deserted the village and went out to beg. Government forced them to go back, and shortly afterwards sent fifteen Kurdish families to tyrannize over the villagers. These have been followed by twenty Circassians.

Constant appeals have been made to Government without any effect.

The above two examples are cited in order to give some idea of the trials which many of the Armenian villagers have to undergo, in addition to the fiscal and political abuses common to all.

I have not been able to verify those two petitions, but have little doubt that they give a fairly good description of the state of affairs in these villages

Undue prominence is not given in these petitions to atrocities which are merely referred to now and then as matters of common occurrence requiring no special comment.

The villagers of Ternerd, describing a visitation of tax-collectors, tell how they came with ten horsemen to collect 5,000 piastres. They remained six days, during which time they lived on the best, and consumed some 1,000 piastres worth of food. The people were beaten, some were suspended by the legs and some suffered castration from the tortures applied. Cats were placed in the women's trousers, and dung thrust into their mouths. To raise the required amount the villagers were forced to apply to the seiefdars, from whom they borrowed at 300 per cent.

Concerning the violation of women, it is very difficult to obtain information from the peasants, who not unnaturally prefer to keep silence on matters affecting their family honour. In eight villages I was told of twenty women who had been abducted during the last five or six years.

After careful consideration of these petitions, and of the information obtained direct from the villagers, the impression remains that the object of the Government is to reduce the Armenians to a state of complete impotence, so that they may all the more easily fall a prey to their Kurdish supplanters. Previous massacres have decimated them. Now the priests and village Reises are singled out for destruction so that the people may be left leaderless. Most of the victims of the late "events" have been young men, and it is chiefly young men who are accused as "fedais" and imprisoned or forced to fly to the mountains. Many times I have heard it said that if there is a big and strong man in a village, he is the one most likely to be singled out for murder or denunication. The Armenian race in Mush is in fact being emasculated.

Decrease of Population.

In Mush I was informed that the village population had decreased 50 per cent. since the massacres. In view of the prolific character of the Armenians, this appeared to be an

obvious exaggeration. Subsequent inquiries, however, amongst the villages show that it is decreasing fast.

The following figures were obtained from reliable source:—

	Before Massacres.	Now.
Zebav	180	141
Alvarinj	851	695
Moghunk	325	210
Koms	545	407
Khars	470	285
Total	2,371	1,738

Decrease of 633, or about 22 per cent.

The following I obtained from the villagers themselves, and may be taken as approximately correct. I am of opinion that the majority of the persons consulted were telling the truth to the best of their ability, but figures in this country have not an exact significance:—

	Year.	Houses.	Year.	Houses.
Arinj	1901	120	1907	72
Human	„	77	„	60
Tzronk	„	160	„	160
Tevnik	„	20	„	20
Kertakos	1897	100	„	60
Khaskeui	1901	300	„	400 (approximate)
Erishter	„	70	„	22
Arkavank	„	53	„	20
Ternerd	„	60	„	25
Arnist	„	70	„	25
Total	..	1,020	..	864

A decrease of 166, or 16 per cent. since 1901.

The solitary increase in the case of Khaskeui is owing to the fact that being a large and rich village it attracts peasants who have deserted their homes elsewhere.

The proportion of independent farmers is decreasing even more rapidly. (See figures on p. 4 of this Report.)

Occupation of Monasteries.

Another grievance of the Armenians is the occupation of monasteries by soldiers, and the prevention of pilgrimages to them. In my humble opinion, however, as long as the revolutionaries give an excuse to the Government for taking this precaution, it is better that they should be so occupied otherwise they would probably share the fate of other monasteries which have been destroyed for harbouring "fedais." A legitimate grievance does, however, lie in the fact that some of their lands have been taken from them. My arrival at Surp Garabad Monastery only took place just in time to prevent the cutting of 1,000 trees to assist in building new barracks at Mush.

Emigration to Russia.

The question of the hour in this vilayet is the proposed emigration of the entire Armenian population to Russia. The idea, as I am informed, originated with an Imperial Iradé of October last permitting the Armenians to emigrate to Russia. On the arrival of spring petitions began to pour into the Russian Consulate at Bitlis until

it became evident that an emigration *en masse* was intended. The Russian Consul told me that he had registered the names of 90,000 persons when he closed the lists, and he was of opinion that the remainder (some 30,000) were anxious to follow their example.

The Director of Passports at Mush told me that he had refused the first applications for passports to Russia as he forsaw that if this precedent was granted, it might have far-reaching consequences.

The wildest reports are flying about the country, and it is difficult to get at the true facts. The Russian Consul here has apparently succeeded in incurring the bitterest hostility of the Turks and the Armenians of Mush, the former of whom say it is a deep-laid plot of the Russian Government to ruin Turkey, and that the Consul sent out "barefoot" emissaries to lure the people into emigration by false promises of free land in Russia, money to pay their debts, expenses, &c. The Armenians also say, with what truth I do not know, that he made them similar promises, and the impression prevails amongst the more ignorant that they are now Russian subjects, and should accordingly be protected. The Turkish authorities have encouraged this feeling of irritation and tried to get them to sign a "Mazbata" to say that they are content, and do not want to leave the country. The Bishop, deluded as he maintains by promises on the part of the authorities, that the lot of the Armenians would be improved, did indeed send a telegram, dated the 15th July, to Constantinople, copy of which I have secured.

In this telegram he says that the people have been stirred up by the revolutionaries (to whom all the late disturbances are due) to emigrate. "Thanks, however, to the good efforts of the Government, and especially the excellent procedure of the Mutessarif," Kevork and his followers were killed, "which caused peace and tranquillity to return to all the people." He ends by asking for remission of arrears of taxes and pardon for "Firars." This telegram has raised up a storm against the Bishop, and the Armenians of Mush town are trying to have him removed. The question may erelong be settled in another way as the Bishop is at present dangerously ill with typhoid. Personally, I believe that this telegram was dictated to him by the Mutessarif, and that in a weak moment he sent it in the hope that his requests would be granted. I know that he now regrets it.

In discussing the matters with the authorities I have carefully refrained from any criticism of the action of the Russian Consul or his Government. I have told them, however, that I consider it as only natural that the Armenians should desire to go to Russia, as they make their lives unbearable in Turkey, and that if they wish to prevent them they should improve their condition here instead of putting all the blame on the Russian Government, the Russian Consul, the revolutionaries, in short, on any one but the true authors of the mischief themselves. I told them, in fact, that unless the present state of the Armenians in this province were materially improved, I should strongly recommend to your Excellency that they should be allowed to go, which I now have the honour to do.

One unfortunate result of the emigration scheme is that the people have in many cases sown less grain this season in the belief that they would be leaving their homes after the harvest. This is likely to cause greater distress than usual in the winter and spring.

I have a copy of a letter sent to the Bishop by the people of Mush, in which, after recapitulating the various massacres since 1894, and enumerating the sufferings and persecutions they have undergone, and still undergo, they say there is nothing left for them but to go to Russia. I myself have received several petitions naïvely requesting that the British Government should kindly arrange with Russia for their emigration.

Attitude of Mutessarif.

On the arrival of the Mutessarif, Safvet Pasha, at Mush, my Russian colleague and myself handed him the suggestions embodied in the Memorandum presented to the Vali of Bitlis by the British and Russian Consuls. We suggested at the same time that, as at the present moment the Reises of all the villages were being called to Mush for the assignment of the tithes, it would be an excellent opportunity for the authorities to prove the seriousness of their intentions by questioning these people, and ascertaining their grievances; and we further proposed that we should assist at the interrogation.

The informal Commission thus proposed was not accepted, however, and I accordingly observed to his Excellency that the first Article of the Consular "programme"

was the "prevention of the great abuses from which the Armenians suffer," and inquired how he proposed to ascertain what were these abuses. His Excellency replied, "from the petitions of the villagers," an eminently unsatisfactory reply, as the constant cry of the villagers is that their complaints are never listened to.

A few days later we requested his Excellency to consider some detailed proposals based on the above-mentioned "programme." He then informed us that he was not authorized to discuss them, and referred us to the Vali.

My impression of the Mutessarif is that he requires careful watching. The manner in which, in his private conversations with me he would promise everything, almost before I had asked him, at once aroused my suspicions. He admits the evil state of the country, but when I attribute it to the Government, he is inclined to "hedge" by laying the blame on the revolutionaries. He also endeavoured to persuade me that the movement is far more widespread that it really is, and to prove that the villagers are in league against the Government, citing in proof of this the "thousands" of Russian rifles which have been seized, all stamped with the Committee mark. As far as I can gather, not more than 200 fire-arms have been collected, most of them of native manufacture.

(Confidential.)

Sometimes, however, he would speak with great frankness, and on one occasion begged me to write to your Excellency confidentially on the rotten state of the finances in this vilayet. He said that the corruption and malpractices of the officials from which so many evils spring, were the result of the irregular payment of their salaries, and said that the appointment of honest men to look after the finance, from the Defterdar downwards, was a matter of crying necessity. He suggested that the appointment of a Special Commission from Constantinople to overhaul the accounts of the last two years, and which might make a general survey of fiscal questions was eminently desirable. The members he said should be men approved of by your Excellency. If the administration of the finances could be placed under the Ottoman Bank as in European Turkey "all the dirt would be washed from the country." Another point that required attention, he continued, was the question of the Hamidié, who take advantage of the fact that they wear no uniform to act like common robbers, sheltering themselves behind their privileged position when detected, in all of which his Excellency appears to have shown a good deal of common sense.

He displayed the greatest cordiality to me as a British official, and said that he trusted my Government, as he knew it had the interests of the country at heart, &c., but I am not inclined to attach much importance to his protestations until I see that he is really carrying out some of his promises. Even the Vali has remarked to me on the facility with which he makes promises and tries to make everything look smooth and easy, whereas it is very much the reverse.

Reforms to be suggested to Vali.

I propose to make verbally the following suggestions to the Vali, with a view to giving specific effect to the general programme of improvements proposed by the British and Russian Consuls on the 13th July.

Fiscal.

Tithes.—To be assessed according to number of kiles sown by each individual.

Military Tax.—Not to be levied on the absent, but to be collected from each person separately.

Selef.—To be forbidden under pain of punishment.

Agricultural Bank.—Measures to be taken to facilitate granting of loans.

Collection of Taxes.—To be made in a regular manner. Tahsildars convicted of the usual malpractices to be dismissed and punished.

Prevention of illegal Taxes.—Including "ver sorma" and other taxes extorted by unauthorized persons.

Remission of Arrears of Taxes.—In cases of obvious inability to pay. Plundered villages to have the value of the goods plundered deducted from their taxes (Baghlou, Hergerd, Sulukh, and Pitari).

Enforcement of Articles 30 and 31 of the Vizierial letter to Valis of Bitlis, &c., of the 20th October, 1895.

Prohibition of forced labour.

Formation of Land Commission to examine title-deeds and restore lands unrightfully held; also to readjust taxation where necessary. If possible, it should not be composed of local officials.

Questions of Public Security.

Punishment of oppressive Beys and Agas.—A few examples to be made to start with by imprisonment and exaction of heavy guarantee for good behaviour.

Control to be exercised over Hamidiés, "Jan Bezars," &c., in accordance with Articles 27 and 28 of Vizierial Letter.

Protection of Villagers.—Safety of roads to be insured.

Restoration of stolen live-stock.

Questions of Local Administration.

Prison and justice.

Enforcement of Articles 19, 25, and 28 of Vizierial Letter.

Pardon to political fugitives.

(Pardon to prisoners would presumably be an act of Imperial clemency.)

Financial Reform.

Removal of corrupt officials.

Regular payment of salaries, especially to gendarmes.

Reform of Gendarmerie.

The present state of the gendarmerie is a matter which, I humbly venture to remark, urgently presses for reform. Their behaviour in the Christian villages must be too well known to your Excellency to make it necessary for me to describe it. In all the vilayets which I have visited they seem to be recruited from a very bad class. In Diarbekir they are well known to be often in league with robbers and brigands.

In theory I presume they are intended to maintain order and protect the law-abiding subjects of His Imperial Majesty from unlawful aggression. In practice they do the exact opposite, and are the terror of the villagers.

When travelling with an escort of zaptiehs, I have often observed how the villagers salute them with an awed respect, as though they were persons of the highest rank. Even in my presence they dread these petty tyrants.

On the other hand, they are hardly to be blamed if they take food and forage from the villagers without payment. A mounted zaptieh is supposed to receive 240 piastres per month. On this he must clothe himself, buy and keep a horse, and feed himself and very likely a large family. Grain in Mush is dear, owing to the troubles, and these miserable wages are obviously insufficient, even if they were regularly paid, which they are not. He is accordingly obliged to live on the villagers, and finding that he has only to command in order to obtain what he requires, he looks upon such requisitioning as being in the natural order of things.

According to Article 5 of an Imperial Iradé sanctioning the decisions of the Council of Ministers, as reported in your Excellency's despatch to the Foreign Office of the 21st June, 1904, it is laid down "that an efficient gendarmerie should be reorganized in Bitlis and the neighbouring vilayets." Nothing in this sense has apparently been done, for it is scarcely credible that the gendarmerie could ever have been worse than it is now.

In my humble opinion, if more care were to be exercised in the selection of candidates, if their wages were to be raised so as to make it possible for them to live on them without external assistance, and finally, if experienced and reliable officers and instructors could be appointed, if possible from the Macedonian gendarmerie, one of the most crying abuses would have been removed from these provinces, and a first serious step would have been made towards obtaining some degree of security for the peaceful population.

I humbly trust that your Excellency will excuse my making these suggestions after so short an experience of this district, in view of the pressing need for some immediate protection of the defenceless population, and of the propitious moment which has apparently arrived for doing something to improve their condition. The present moment appears to us to be opportune for the following reasons.

It would seem that the Turkish Government is really getting alarmed at this combined movement of the people towards emigration, and it cannot be so blind as not to see that if something is not done to remove some of their grievances, such an emigration may actually take place, to the great impoverishment of the country. The revolutionaries of Mush, I also have good grounds for believing, intend to abstain at present from active measures, which might disturb the peace. They too are strongly opposed to the emigration.

The present Vali, as far as I can gather, is disposed to make some attempt to carry out reforms. At least he is not fanatical, nor disposed apparently to play a double game. Moreover, remembering the fate of his predecessor, and of several other Valis, he will not be in a position to neglect the advice of Consuls, which might cause them to report adversely on him to their Embassies, and I trust that I shall be acting in accordance with your Excellency's wishes in telling him plainly that so long as he works honestly for the order and tranquillity of the country, he may count on the active support of His Majesty's Embassy.

Much depends on the attitude of the Mutessarif at Mush. He is bound in principle to carry out the orders of the Vali, but he will find it very difficult to do so in the teeth of local opinion and hostility. If he fails to do his duty I shall strongly press for his removal; but if he receives support from "another place" it may be very hard to get rid of him, or secure the appointment of a suitable successor. To put the case briefly I have some hope that a good deal may be done just now for the Armenians of Mush, unless the Palace sends, as it has so often sent before, secret instructions to the provincial authorities that whatever reforms they may have promised in theory, they are in practice to continue their oppression of the Christians, in which case the condition of the Armenians in Mush will remain as hopeless as ever.

The Revolutionaries.

The recent activity of the revolutionaries appears to have been indirectly caused by The Hague Conference, in which I believe some suggestion was unfortunately made with regard to the inclusion of the Armenian question amongst the subjects of debate. False hopes were certainly widely disseminated amongst the ignorant peasantry by the professional revolutionaries, and it was apparently believed amongst the latter that a suitable moment had arrived for attracting the attention of Europe. Their emissaries were sent to try and stir up the villagers in regions hitherto outside their sphere of activity, and I was told in Keghi (Erzeroum Vilayet) that one of them had appeared there shortly before the Sulukh incident to the dismay of the inhabitants, who, however, refused him any support.

I do not believe that the professional agitators number more than forty in the Mush district, but the presence even of this small band cannot fail to influence the attitude of the authorities towards the Armenians.

(Confidential.)

During my stay in Mush the dragoman of the Diabekir Vice-Consulate, who has rendered valuable services in obtaining a large mass of useful information, much of it acquired with great difficulty, succeeded in getting into touch with the revolutionaries through their agent in Mush with my knowledge and approval, but without my official authorization, and I allowed him to continue his private relations with them until he finally succeeded in obtaining an interview with Rupen, Kevork's successor, at considerable personal risk, in a village near the town.

Before proceeding further I would beg to assure your Excellency that his relations with the revolutionaries were purely personal, and though I authorized him to convey my opinions on the revolutionary question to them, expressing them as his own, I was careful to impress on him the importance of keeping me altogether outside the matter, as I declined to recognize or negotiate in any way with these persons.

He obtained much interesting information from Rupen, whom he describes as remarkably intelligent. Kavork was apparently a man of drunken and violent habits

who yet had acquired great influence over the villagers by his personal magnetism and force of character. From letters he showed to the dragoman it appeared that the villagers sympathized far more than I had believed possible with the Fedai, whom they consulted on many points, often asking for protection. It is, perhaps, not surprising that the peasants should feel some sympathy for the revolutionaries, who, though harsh and cruel, are yet the only men they have ever known to strike a blow in their defence. It appears that they have succeeded in terrorizing the Kurds to a certain extent by assassinating several of the most oppressive of the Beys and Agas, and the Kurds are greatly impressed by the manner in which—on occasion they will stand up to the regular soldiers—a thing they do not venture on themselves. In one village the inhabitants said to me openly that if it had not been for the protection of the Fedai they would all have turned Moslem long ago.

The dragoman pointed out to Rupen that the opinion held about the revolutionaries in Europe was that they were deliberately inciting the Turks to reprisals on the defenceless population in order to attract the attention of the Powers. That if they really had the welfare of the people at heart, they could best prove it by withdrawing altogether, and thus facilitating the work of the Powers in introducing reforms. The pitiable condition of the Armenians in Mush was largely their work, and the Armenians in Kharput and Diarbekir, who had not been disturbed by the Fedai, enjoyed a comparative tranquillity. The results of their work in this country were deplorable. Let them at least try the effect of a temporary withdrawal. Otherwise they would spoil all attempts at reform and the Armenians would at last be driven to emigrate *en masse*, which presumably was not the solution of the Armenian question which they desired, &c.

Impressed by these arguments, and after a long discussion, Rupen at last undertook to agree to this proposal, and to send me a letter promising to leave Turkey after consulting with his companions. I regret to say, however, that he appears to have been overruled by the the latter, for, though I received three successive letters from the Mush Committee promising to leave Turkey, they made their withdrawal conditional on the introduction of reforms. I, of course, declined to accept these letters, and let it be known that I would only take notice of a promise to withdraw unconditionally. The "agent" of the revolutionaries at Mush, who first introduced the dragoman to the latter, the Bishop's Council, and several other Notables, are much incensed at the revolutionaries' refusal to withdraw, and say that they will stir up the population against them and compel them to leave.

It is possible that, on consideration, Rupen and his companions may change their minds and depart, in which case much will have been done to remove the chief excuse for the Government's persecution. The revolutionary agent at Bitlis has, I believe, written to Rupen asking him to agree to an unconditional withdrawal, and his answer is expected shortly.

One hopeful sigh is that the revolutionary agent in Mush has promised to write to the head of the Committee in Van asking him to consider the foregoing arguments, and to recall Rupen and his band from Mush. I venture to say that if certain genuine reforms were put into execution at the present moment the revolutionaries might be impelled to assist matters by withdrawing. If they do not they will clearly have demonstrated that it is not the interests of their fellow-countrymen that they really have at heart.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. B. HEARD

P.S. Later. *August* 20.—The Vali has promised to instruct the Mutessarif of Mush—

1. To arrange that the military tax should only be levied on those who are able to pay.
2. To abolish "Selef" and form a Commission to reduce debts of villagers.
3. To facilitate borrowing from Agricultural Bank.
4. To prevent abuses in tax-collecting, and dismiss offending officials.
5. To prevent forced labour.
6. To imprison certain notorious Kurdish oppressors.
7. To ensure safety for villagers.
8. To improve condition of prison and hasten judicial proceedings.
9. Arrears of absent villagers not to be levied on remainder.
10. To proclaim amnesty for political fugitives.

His Excellency is anxious that these orders should be confirmed by the Grand Vizier, so that it may not be said that he is acting under Consular pressure. He was greatly surprised by some of the information I gave him about the state of the Mush population, and is most anxious that I should continue to keep him informed on such matters, as his own officials never tell him such things.

Other parts of this vilayet, notably the Boulanik, Akhlat, and Sert districts are stated to be in a very disturbed condition, and tribal feuds are again causing fighting in the town.

The Russian Consul still remains in Mush indefinitely, though the Mutessarif has already referred us both to the Vali for further representations. I am informed that he is occupied with the emigration question. It is to be hoped that he will soon return so as to enable us to continue combined action as desired by your Excellency.

W. B. H.

[30074] No. 96.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No 389.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, September* 19, 1907.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 551 of the 4th instant, transmitting a report on the deplorable condition of the Harput Vilayet.

The recent reports on the state of affairs in Armenia are such as to give rise to considerable anxiety, and I have to instruct your Excellency to lose no opportunity of impressing on the Ottoman Government the increasing seriousness of the situation and the necessity of taking measures to prevent a general conflagration.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY

[31640] No. 97.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 23.)

(No. 568.)
Sir, *Constantinople, September* 12, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Beirout, reporting on his visit to Beiteddine and interview with Youssouf Pasha, the new Governor of the Lebanon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 97.

Consul-General Sir R. Hay Drummond-Hay to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 77.)
Sir, *Beirout, August* 28, 1907.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 69 of the 1st instant, I returned on the 26th instant from a visit to Youssouf Pasha at Beiteddine, including a short tour in the Druse district of Shouf.

I found the officials of the Administration and the inhabitants in general favourably impressed by their new Governor, and I used my best endeavours during my tour to encourage that feeling by assuring those with whom I came in contact that Youssouf Pasha desired to govern with impartiality and justice. My encampment was close to Beiteddine, and I had, therefore, several opportunities of discussing affairs with his Excellency, whom I found well-informed on most of the administrative questions that called for his immediate attention. He has already taken steps to curtail the powers hitherto held by members of the Administrative Council, in connection with the construction of roads, &c., in the mountain which led to innumerable abuses.

Arrangements have also been made for increasing the gendarmerie by a grant of £T. 2,000 from the "Mehmoulets" or indirect taxes. This measure met with considerable opposition from certain members of the Council, as, according to the

statute, the salaries of officials and of the militia should be taken from the 7,000 bourses representing the direct taxes. An increase of the gendarmerie is, however, urgently required for an effective government of the province, and without a fresh cadastre there are no other means for acquiring the necessary funds to meet this extra expenditure.

Before taking leave of Youssouf Pasha, I begged him to bear in mind the importance of maintaining the equilibrium between the Maronites and the minor sects, and also between the factions of which each sect is composed. In speaking of the Druses, I drew his Excellency's attention to the rivalry existing between Nessib Bey Djemblat and Emir Mustapha Arslan, and I submitted that it would be inadvisable to appoint either of these feudal Chiefs Kaïmakam of the Druse district. I also warned his Excellency against the Emir Shekeeb Arslan, who has lately placed himself at the head of a third party, and is intriguing for that post. There are many personal objections to him, and his appointment would be very unpopular among a large portion of the Christians and Druses. The two chief posts held by Druses are the Kaïmakamship of Shouf and the Presidency of the Criminal Court. They are both at present held by partisans of Nessib Bey, and it is therefore probable that the Governor will have to replace one of them sooner or later by an official belonging to the Emir Mustapha's party.

His Excellency replied that he fully shared my views on all the points I had brought under his notice connected with the Administration, and begged me to remain assured that he would act in accordance with them during my absence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. HAY DRUMMOND-HAY.

[31641] No. 98.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 23.)

(No. 570.)
Sir, *Therapia, September 13, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to state that I have received a telegram from the Acting British Consul at Erzeroum reporting that on the morning of the 10th instant a mob dragged from his shop and brutally murdered an Armenian suspected of cornering wheat, and also severely wounded a Moslem merchant and plundered an Armenian house. Although Erzeroum had been tranquil for some months, Mr. Young points out that these incidents show the inefficiency of the local authorities, for no attempt was made by the police or the troops to oppose the mob, and no arrests were made, so that there is no security against renewed lawlessness.

I have drawn the attention of the Grand Vizier to what has happened, and his Highness has assured me that he is alive to the situation and will take the steps best calculated to allay the agitation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[31642] No. 99.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 23.)

(No. 571.)
Sir, *Therapia, September 13, 1907.*

IN continuation of my despatch No. 563 of the 10th instant, I have the honour to forward a further despatch from Mr. Vice-Consul Heard, reporting on the situation in the Vilayet of Bitlis. It shows that the Vali is sincerely anxious to bring about a better state of things, but the whole vilayet is in a chaotic condition, and the temporary absence of Tahir Pasha may have a deplorable effect. I do not think that, in the circumstances, it is advisable that Mr. Heard should leave Bitlis, as he proposes, in order to confer with Captain Dickson.

I am including this Report from Mr. Heard in the Memorandum which I am to put before the Grand Vizier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 99.

Vice-Consul Heard to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 4.)
Sir, *Bitlis, August 25, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to report as follows on the present situation in this vilayet :—

With reference to the ten points enumerated in the postscript of my preceding despatch, with regard to which the Vali had promised to send instructions to the Mutessarif of Mush, I have the honour to state that he has now done so. With regard to No. 6, his present mode of action is to have the judicial records searched for charges against various notorious Beys and Agas, and to have them imprisoned indefinitely, pending trial. If they are only kept in prison long enough, this measure may have a good effect. I have submitted to his Excellency a list of some of those chiefly responsible for oppression and outrages on Armenians.

With regard to No. 7, the mode of action is being left to the Mutessarif, who has, I understand, replied that the villagers enjoy security, and can circulate freely. Whether he believes this to be the case or not I cannot say. But I think that the Vali, after what I have told him, realizes the need for affording protection to the villagers. It is somewhat difficult to see how this is to be done unless the local authorities act in good faith and with vigour, which they never appear to have done up to the present time.

With regard to No. 8, the Public Prosecutor has been instructed to see that justice is carried out with due dispatch.

Owing to the unwillingness of the villagers to pay the tithes calculated on the last five year's average, as stated in my telegram of the 19th instant, the same are to be put up to auction, preference being given to the villagers if they can bid as much as the tithe-farmers. It is unfortunate that the recent Iradé was not calculated on the average paid per capita and not collectively, as, in view of the general decrease in the number of tithe-payers, the villagers lose in most cases by the recent arrangement. In my humble opinion, it would be well if next year the tithes could be collected on the number of kilós of grain sown, so that the nultezins might be eliminated altogether. I already hear that the latter are putting pressure on the Armenians to prevent their buying the tithes themselves.

I believe the Vali is genuinely anxious to carry out reforms in the vilayet, but I am beginning to fear that the task may prove too great for him unless the Government is prepared to back him with force if required. He welcomes any suggestions I may make to him, and seems to take a common-sense view of things, rare amongst Turkish officials.

I am convinced that nothing of practical use will be done to improve the condition of the Armenians that is not brought to the attention of the authorities by the Consuls, and that in order to see that it is carried out the latter will be obliged to watch carefully the behaviour of Mutessarifs and Kaïmakams and ascertain from the people themselves exactly what is being done for them. The mere fact that an order has been given and acknowledged by a subordinate is not a sufficient guarantee that it will be carried out.

The Vali has also instructed the Mutessarif of Mush to attend personally to petitions, and to see that the matters of complaint are given prompt attention.

Of the many petitions received from individuals, I submitted the following one to the Vali as an experiment. The result was not particularly satisfactory. One Nagop Kazatcharian of Alijan stated that he was once a well-to-do farmer, but that his stock had been repeatedly robbed by various Kurds and Circassians, and his house looted, so that he was now living in a state of absolute destitution in Mush, with eight starving children. Chief among his enemies is Haji Abdurrahim of Mush, who threatens to have him murdered if ever he returns to Alijan, as he and certain others desire his land.

The Vali communicated the sense of the above to the Mutessarif of Mush, and requested him to investigate. The latter sent back the strange reply that he had ascertained that some time ago a certain Kerim Aga, brother of Haji Abdurrahim, had been killed by revolutionaries at Alijan, which he appeared to regard as a sufficient explanation of the case. The Vali agreed that this occurrence was entirely irrelevant, but I begged him not to proceed further in the matter unless he could guarantee the life of the petitioner against his enemies, and he promised to consult the Mutessarif on this point before taking further steps.

The disorderly state of the vilayet is becoming a matter of grave concern, and it would seem that vigorous and forcible methods may be required to prevent matters from taking a turn which may have unpleasant consequences for the Imperial Government. The leniency hitherto shown to the Kurds instead of conciliating them has had the result of making them more lawless and independent than ever, and they seem to show an absolute contempt for Government authority.

The following is a brief summary of the disturbances, &c., which have been brought to my notice during the last fortnight:—

Robberies by Kurds in Akhlat, over 200 live-stock taken and three houses looted.

The Hasananli Kurds are reported to have threatened to turn all the Armenians in Akhlat out of their villages.

Seventy cattle robbed from Taghout, in Boulanik.

Disorders in Bitlis town. Gendarmerie corporal thrashed by Kurds in bazaar. No official dared to come to his assistance.

Fighting between rival factions in Tash-Mahallé quarter. One killed, one wounded, one house burnt. Troops present, but did nothing. Three days later a second fight started, which this time was prevented by troops.

Modky Kurds raided seventy cattle from Zeidan quarter of town. Troops have been sent after them.

Disorders in vilayet. Two Kurds of Slok murdered by Modky Kurds for an old feud. Bodies brought to Bitlis but no steps taken.

On the 6th August, Aghveran, near Melazgerd, was attacked by Mehmed Emin Bey, Colonel of Hasananli Hamidié. Twelve killed, five wounded and fifteen houses burnt. Villagers fled. Mehmed Emin Bey, wishing to compel the villagers to join him in an attack on one Riza Bey, had sent his son to bring them out by force. They resisted, and the son was killed, for which reason the village was raided. The Vali has promised to send an influential Sheikh to bring about a reconciliation.

August 22.—It is reported that Kurds round Sairt are in revolt. Konak has been surrounded, prison broken into and prisoners released. Acting Mutessarif has fled. A company of soldiers has been sent to Sairt. (The last Mutessarif fled from Sairt two months ago.)

Kaïmakam of Kharzan, in Zokh, reported to have been beaten by Kurds. No details.

A Yuzbashi and forty soldiers recently sent to collect taxes and arrest fugitives at Simok, a Kurdish village, five hours east of Bitlis, were told they would be shot if they did not go away. They then retired.

Fighting between Kassin Bey and Hassananli near Marnik—eight to ten reported killed.

The villagers of Gamakh, one hour from Bitlis, have brought all their belongings into the town fearing an attack of Modky Kurds.

The above disorders, though I cannot guarantee their accuracy in matters of detail, are sufficient to show the present condition of the vilayet, which is daily growing worse. If the Vali is permitted to send troops to punish and repress when necessary, the turbulent elements may be eventually suppressed. If, however, troops are to be forbidden to fire on the lawless tribesmen, the authority of the Government must become seriously impaired.

Since their recent successful *coup* against the last Vali, the Sheikhs and Notables of Bitlis have realized their power, and hold almost daily consultation on the subject of the present situation. It is said that they boast that unless the Government introduces reforms—not reforms pressed on it by the Powers, but reforms such as they consider satisfactory—they will introduce and carry out reforms of their own. It is rumoured that the bazaars are soon to be closed, and a telegram dispatched to the Palace enumerating their grievances and demands. I have been told that these revolutionary ideas are inspired from Erzeroum or Van, but on this I cannot offer an opinion.

One of the Notables of the town with whom I recently had an interesting conversation spoke very plainly about the situation. He said they did not trust the Government when it promised reforms, and blamed the policy, which, after setting the Kurds against the Armenians to the ruin of the latter, is now setting the Kurds against each other with the same end in view.

He also said that there was no money in Bitlis though the people were overtaxed. Consequently the officials were not paid, and zaptiés were compelled to rob and ill-treat the people.

It would, indeed, appear that one of the chief obstacles to reform lies in the

disordered state of the finances and the impoverished condition of the vilayet. If taxes are to be readjusted and arrears remitted so as to enable the Christian villagers to start clear of debt, the State will probably lose heavily in the first year, and the salaries of officials will remain unpaid as before.

The Christians in the town are much exercised in their minds as to the attitude they should adopt in case of an anti-Government outbreak. If they stand neutral, the Kurds will probably attack them; if they join with them, they will certainly be the first to feel the avenging arm of the Government.

At present there is no anti-Christian feeling in the town like that in Mush. Indeed, in the recent riot against the Vali, Christians and Moslems fraternized, and I hear from a reliable source that the archives relating to the Armenian revolutionaries were handed over to the Armenian rioters.

I have secret information that the revolutionaries in Mush have been summoned to meet and confer, probably on the expediency or otherwise of withdrawing from the country.

The revolutionaries in Van have also been summoned to a meeting. Their subjects of debate is surmised to be—

1. The same as that of their comrades in Mush (Rupen had promised to consult them on the matter); or
2. The prospects of an armed rising against the Government in conjunction with the "Young Turk" party.

Incredible accounts are current here of the openness with which the Fedai carry on their propaganda in Van. They are said to hold their own Courts of Justice, publish their own newspapers, &c., and to be in communication with the Young Turkish party. In view of the close connection between the situations in Van and Bitlis, I should be glad if your Excellency would be so good as to allow me to pay a visit to the former place as soon as a convenient opportunity occurs, in order to confer with Captain Dickson on various matters of common interest.

August 27.—More recent information modifies the gravity of some of the disturbances mentioned in the foregoing despatch.

The report recently current in the town that the prison at Sairt had been broken into, and that the Mutessarif had fled, appears to have no basis. On the other hand, it appears that the Bohten tribes in the south of Sairt Sanjak are in a very disturbed state, and the Chaldean Patriarch of Mosul has telegraphed asking that the villagers may be protected. The Vali is sending troops.

The new Mutessarif of Sairt has arrived in Bitlis. The rumour that the Kaïmakam of Kharzan had been beaten is also unconfirmed.

In the fighting between Kassim Bey and the Hasananli it appears that no lives were lost, though some cattle were raided.

The Headman of Agveran, which is a Kurdish village, informs me that seventeen villagers have been killed and three wounded by the Hasananli under Mehmed Emin Bey. The mosque in which they had taken refuge was burnt, and many were shot as they escaped; 3,200 sheep and 1,580 other live-stock were raided. The village, which was formerly wealthy, has been stripped of everything down to the doors of the houses. The Vali says that, in addition to the Sheikh, who has been sent to try and persuade the Hasananli to restore the stolen property, he is also sending soldiers.

The inhabitants are very anxious to become British subjects, so as to get protection. The Reis said that if this was allowed many other Kurdish villages would follow suit. This idea is presumably a result of the Russian emigration scheme.

The villagers, who are now dispersed and destitute, ask me to beg your Excellency to represent their sad condition to the Central Government.

The Vali, before starting for Van, has given the following orders:—

Names of all fugitives in Bitlis Sanjak to be supplied by Bishop's Council, and pardon to be proclaimed to such as are not convicted of crime.

Proclamation to be made through Bishop's Council that villagers are to be allowed to bid for their own tithes. (This is very necessary.)

Four persons of Mush, including the Mayor, to be exiled.

The Mutessarif of Mush has again been instructed to see that the villagers are protected. His Excellency has pointed out to him that the best way to counteract their desire to emigrate is to remove their grievances.

It is unfortunate that Tahir Pasha is leaving at a moment when his presence is urgently required to maintain order in the vilayet. I understand that nothing is to be

expected from the Defterdar, who resumes his duties as Acting Vali. His Excellency however, informs me that he will still continue to issue orders to the Mutessarifs from Van.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. B. HEARD.

[31353] No. 100.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 20.)

No. 575.)
Sir,
Therapia, September 14, 1907.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 520 of the 20th August respecting the state of things in the Vilayet of Van, I have the honour to report that Reshid Pasha, Mutessarif of the Dardanelles, has now been appointed to the post of Vali. Reshid Pasha had not been many months at Dardanelles, but had created an excellent impression there by his energy in municipal reform, and a reputation for honesty and good will.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[31648] No. 101.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 23.)

(No. 578.)
Sir,
Therapia, September 15, 1907.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 328 of the 4th June, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Smyrna, respecting the measures taken for the suppression of brigandage in the Vilayet of Aidin.

On receipt of this despatch I sent a message to the Grand Vizier, pointing out the necessity of greater activity, and his Highness consequently telegraphed to the Vali in that sense.

The Vali has replied, saying that he is sending a list of brigands recently captured, and that energetic military measures are being organized against Chakirji. I shall continue the pressure on the Porte in regard to this matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 101.

Consul-General Cumberbatch to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 47.)
Sir,
August 24, 1907.

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 4th June, on the subject of the measures taken for the suppression of brigandage in the Aidin Vilayet, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that I have received the following private report from a correspondent in the interior :—

On the 19th instant, at about 7 P.M., a band of eight brigands visited Arpas, a village in the Bozdougan Kaza, and two hours away from Nazli, an important town on the Smyrna-Aidin Railway. The Headman of the village, who was sitting at a coffee-house with several others, was told to produce 1,000*l.* The others present were interrogated, and one called Yakoub Agha was shot down because he was an Albanian. After disarming the two village zaptiehs and relieving them of their Martini cartridges, the brigands conducted Osman Bey, the Headman, to his house, where they forced him to give up 200*l.*, which was all the money he had by him, and they said that they would come back within a month for 800*l.* more. They got hold of Ali Bey, the brother of Osman Bey, but they found no money in his house, so they thrashed him and disabled his arm.

After staying three hours in the village the band left in the direction of the Madran Dagh, and in an encounter with three gendarmes across the Ak-Tchai they killed two of them. The man who escaped reports that he counted at least twenty

brigands, which, if true, added to the unprovoked murder of the Albanian simply because of his nationality, and to the allegation of some villagers that they recognized Kara Ali, a companion of the famous brigand chief Tchakirdji, leads to the conviction that this is another of the latter's daring exploits, carried out in spite of the fact that there must be about 2,000 soldiers, gendarmes, and others placed under the orders of General Tewfik Pasha with the object of suppressing brigandage in general and of capturing this notorious outlaw in particular.

I considered it my duty to communicate the above news to the Governor-General on the 22nd instant. Faik Pasha found my information quite correct, and while assuring me of his unremitting efforts towards stamping out brigandage and preventing any untoward incident near Smyrna, complained bitterly of the generally friendly attitude of the rural population towards the brigands, prompted no doubt by fear, to which he attributes the non-success of the military authorities to capture Tchakirdji, of whom, on account of his ferocity and fearlessness, all stand in mortal dread.

I ventured to observe that, in my humble opinion, the troops and gendarmes, if properly handled by a competent officer, ought to be amply sufficient to drive a band of twenty brigands out of the country if not to capture them, whatever may be the feelings of the peasantry towards them ; but that, if Tewfik Pasha considered the force at his disposal insufficient, he ought to ask for an increase in their number.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

[31656] No. 102.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 23.)

(No. 587.)
Sir,
Therapia, September 18, 1907

WITH reference to my despatch No. 563 of the 10th instant, I have the honour to report that the Grand Vizier, on hearing from Mr. Fitzmaurice that I had received reports from Mr. Vice-Consul Heard respecting the maladministration in the Bitlis Vilayet, inquired what were the leading points, as the affairs of Moush and Tahir Pasha's recommendations were forming the subject of communication with the Ministries of the Interior, Justice, and War.

Mr. Fitzmaurice replied that the main points were—

1. To mitigate and gradually abolish the iniquitous and ruinous system of Selemderlik.
2. To increase the facilities for borrowing from the Agricultural Bank.
3. The deportation of notorious Kurdish oppressors of the Armenian population in the Moush district.
4. To relieve the congestion in the Moush prison, the sanitary state of which was deplorable in the extreme, while many of the prisoners had been languishing there for long periods without any semblance of trial.
5. Not to exact from villagers arrears of taxes for absentees.
6. To stop the intrigues of the big tithe-farmers of Bitlis, who were upsetting in the Akhlat district the system recently sanctioned of levying the tithes on the basis of a five years' average.

His Highness sent for the Secretary-General of the Ministry of the Interior, and ordered telegraphic instructions to be sent to Moush and Bitlis in the sense of Nos. 1 and 2. As regards No. 3, he had not yet obtained the needful Imperial sanction (although I learn that some of the Kurds have, as I have already reported, been already removed).

4. His Highness ordered telegraphic instructions to be sent at once to relieve the congestion by hiring a Khan in the town of Moush, and for the Bitlis Procureur to proceed at once to Moush and expedite with all possible despatch pending judicial cases.

5. His Highness had a telegram sent reminding the authorities of an Imperial Iradé, according to which a village is not to be held responsible for the arrears of taxes of absentee villagers without an attempt being made to ascertain the whereabouts of the latter, that is, whether they are dead, have left the district or country without permission, or are hiding, or out with revolutionary bands.

6. His Highness said the matter was somewhat complicated and difficult, but that he was sending instructions that, in view of the bad crops and prevailing distress, the extortionate methods of the tithe-farmers should not be countenanced or encouraged by the local authorities, who were to see that the tithes were collected without undue harshness or rigour.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[31658] No. 103.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 23.)

(No. 589.)
Sir, *Therapia, September 18, 1907.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 553 of the 4th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Hodeida reporting the disturbances created there by time-expired soldiers returning from the Yemen.

Dr. Richardson's remarks respecting the terrible loss of life among the Turkish troops employed in that region and the drain on the military resources of the Empire bear out the observations contained in my despatch No. 444 of the 24th July.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 103

Vice-Consul Richardson to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 64.)
Sir, *Hodeida, August 26, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to confirm my cablegram of the 22nd instant, reporting the departure of the transport "Termizghan," that sailed for Beyrout on the night of the 20th, carrying away 1,200 time-expired soldiers from this district.

The above men were called out to join the colours between the Turkish years 1316 and 1318 (1900-1902).

Disorderly and mutinous conduct continues to prevail in the ranks of the troops serving in this vilayet.

The Albanian battalions stationed at Sana'a, impatient of being relieved and sent back to their Army Corps in European Turkey, have been committing excesses in the capital during the early part of this month. Besides looting the bazaars they have made raids into the Jewish quarter of the city, carrying off and outraging its female residents.

It was reported here about a fortnight ago that they had imprisoned their junior officers, assaulted a General, and even offered insults to the Commander-in-chief.

About the 14th instant eight battalions of these troops, 2,400 strong, left Sana'a without permission bound for the sea coast, carrying away two cannon and their arms, and forcibly bringing along with them as a hostage General Mohideen Pasha, son-in-law of Fezi Pasha, the Vali and military commander.

It would appear that the Commander-in-chief had issued instructions telegraphically to the military posts and forts *en route* to fire on the mutinous Albanians, which caused the latter to take the precaution of providing themselves with their arms and two cannon for their protection, and a General as their prisoner to insure that they would not be molested in their march to the seaboard.

The soldiers looted caravans *en route*, and the shops at Menakha, Hujjeila, Obal, and Bajal. At the latter place a rather serious encounter took place with the inhabitants, in which there were many casualties. The townspeople invoked the assistance of the neighbouring tribesmen, and matters would have gone very hard with the troops had the authorities not pacified the local population by imprisoning the Albanian ringleaders and promising payment of blood-money to the tribesmen.

It was feared that there would be serious trouble in Hodeida with the arrival of the Albanians, and Fezi Pasha had telegraphed to the Mutessarif here to the effect that this might be anticipated, and instructing him to inform the Arab residents that they should take steps to protect themselves should the necessity arise.

The eight battalions marched into Hodeida on the 21st instant, but have been very quiet since.

It might be mentioned that these eight battalions were sent out to the Yemen in 1905 for the suppression of the Imam's revolt, and their total strength was 6,400 men when they disembarked at Hodeida. About 800 drafts (mixed) have arrived in the meantime to replete their thinned battalions, and now, two years latter, on the eve of their return they can only muster 2,400 men in the eight battalions!

These troops were generally utilized in all the Turkish engagements against the Imam, and saw the brunt of the fighting during that prolonged and arduous campaign. They suffered heavily in the expedition of the winter of 1905 against the stronghold of Shahara, where the total Turkish losses were estimated at between 8,000 and 10,000 men.

The transport "Smyrna" from Constantinople and Smyrna anchored in the roadstead yesterday morning and landed 325 mules. She proceeded to Camaran this morning, and on her return, after completion of twenty-four hours' quarantine, will discharge a quantity of fodder and stores for the Military Department, and disembark fifty men of the Transport Corps.

The Albanian battalions will most probably be transported in the above vessel in the course of next week.

The local military authorities inform me that four battalions of regulars from the Adana district and about 12,000 drafts from Anatolia are expected shortly for service in this vilayet, where the strength of the Army Corps cannot exceed 20,000 or 25,000 men of all arms.

Ferik Yussuf Pasha, perhaps the most able and successful General in the Yemen that has kept the Imam's hordes at bay in the vicinity of Amran during the past eighteen months, has now been recalled to head-quarters and stationed at Rauda, which is about 3½ miles north of the capital.

This step, taken under issue of an Imperial Iradé, was the result of a complaint submitted to the Sultan by the Sheikh of Amran, Hizam-es-Sa'ar, during the recent visit of the Yemen Sheikhs to Constantinople. It was no secret that the above General was in the habit of sacking towns he passed through, and encouraged looting amongst the troops under his command.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. A. RICHARDSON.

[31663] No. 104.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 23.)

(No. 594.)
Sir, *Therapia, September 18, 1907.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 262 of the 1st May, I have the honour to transmit a French translation of an article in the "Sabah" respecting the progress of the Hedjaz Railway, which has appeared in the "Levant Herald." The article is mainly devoted to a description of the route between Mecca and Medina, but you will observe that the writer anticipates that the Medina section will be inaugurated on the Prophet's birthday (31st March), and that this year's pilgrims will be able to make the whole return journey from Medina by train.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 104.

Extract from the "Levant Herald."

LE CHEMIN DE FER DU HEDJAZ.

ON lit dans le "Sabah":—

Aucune œuvre Islamique aussi grande et aussi glorieuse que le Chemin de Fer du Hedjaz n'a été exécutée depuis la date de propagation de l'Islam jusqu'au règne de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan. Cette grande voie approche maintenant de Médine et,

dès à présent, on organise des adjudications en vue de se procurer les matériaux nécessaires pour le prolongement de cette ligne de Médine à La Mecque.

La nouvelle est accueillie avec la plus vive satisfaction par tous les Musulmans, qui voient dans ce succès l'appui évident du Ciel et adressent des vœux sincères au Tout-Puissant pour la conservation des jours précieux et l'accroissement de la gloire de Sa Majesté. La distance qui sépare Damas de Médine est de 1,363 et de La Mecque 1,753 kilom. Il y a donc 450 kilom. de voie à construire entre les deux Villes Saintes. Cette partie de la ligne sera très rapidement construite, car on n'y rencontrera pas les difficultés qu'on a eu à surmonter sur les 1,000 kilom. déjà terminés, où la voie traverse des régions en grande partie désertes et dépourvues d'eau.

On ne connait pas encore tous les détails du tracé choisi entre les deux villes. Toutefois, quel que soit le parcours de la voie, celle-ci traversera des lieux habités et abondamment pourvues d'eau. Le "Mirat-el-Haremeï" (Miroir des deux Villes Saintes) donne de nombreux détails au sujet des routes et étapes qui existent entre Médine et La Mecque. Une de ces routes la plus importante est celle dite Sultani. Les voyageurs qui la prennent en partant à dos de chameaux de La Mecque arrivent en six heures à Vadii-Fatma, célèbre village entouré de vignes, jardins, citronniers, culture maraîchère, et abondamment pourvu d'eau.

A deux heures plus loin il y a l'étape de Birri-Asfari, pourvue de puits d'eau douce dont un connu sous le nom de Birrel Tefeli est sain, le Prophète ayant bu de son eau. Après huit heures de voyage on arrive à la troisième étape, Khalis, qui est également une localité verdoyante, pourvue de cours d'eau.

Les caravanes s'y arrêtent peu et arrivent deux heures après à Cazimié, quatrième étape, où l'on vend toujours du poisson en abondance à cause de la proximité de la mer. L'étape suivante est Rabigh, distante de seize heures de Médine.

On peut voir de cette localité la mer. Jusqu'ici la route n'est hérissée que de quelques petites collines.

De Rabigh à Médine les routes se multiplient, mais en suivant la route Sultani on arrive d'abord à Mestouri, et de là à Birrel Cheik et à Safra Toutes ces localités sont pourvues de puits.

Safra possède en outre des cours d'eau et des jardins, plantés surtout de dattiers et d'arbres à henné et de limoniers. Après Safra on arrive à Hamra, localité qui produit le henné et le baume, puis on traversant des lieux fertiles, à Djédidé, Houbedjéyé, Birri-Abbas, Birri-Cherbouñ.

Il y a deux autres routes nouvellement ouvertes entre les deux villes, celle de Ferr et celle de Gair, qui traversent également des localités plantées d'arbres et pourvues d'eau. Quel que soit enfin le parcours choisi entre les deux villes pour la construction du chemin de fer, les travaux seront poussés avec la plus grande activité.

Le premier train arrivant à La Mecque sera le commencement d'une nouvelle ère de prospérité pour toute l'Arabie. Un devoir s'impose ici à chaque Musulman : c'est de se hâter de contribuer, dans la mesure de ses forces, à l'achèvement de cette grande œuvre. Ajoutons que la section du chemin de fer aboutissant à Médine sera inaugurée le 12 Rébi-ul-Evvel prochain, fête de la naissance du Prophète. Les travaux ne rencontreront aucune difficulté sur cette voie, sauf au kilom. 1,145. Ainsi les pèlerins se rendant cette année aux Villes Saintes pourront, au retour, prendre les trains de Médine même.

[31666] No. 105.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 23.)

(No. 597.)
Sir,
Therapia, September 17, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith an extract from the "Levant Herald," according to which the new road between Bagdad and Aleppo is now open, and travellers have performed the journey in seven days.

If the facts are as stated, the work has been pushed on more rapidly than was expected by Major Ramsay, who referred to the subject in his diary for the week ending the 22nd July.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 105.

Extract from the "Levant Herald."

LA ROUTE BAGDAD–ALEP.

NOUS avons déjà dit, hier, que le Gouverneur-Général du Vilayet de Bagdad avait annoncé que des travaux importants, entrepris depuis quelque temps sur la route reliant Bagdad à Alep, travaux dont une partie est déjà terminée, avaient abrégé considérablement le trajet qui prend ordinairement vingt-six jours.

Dans une nouvelle dépêche, le Gouverneur-Général dit que des voyageurs sont partis de Bagdad par la nouvelle route, mais on ne sait pas en combien de jours ils sont arrivés à Alep. Toutefois, des voyageurs partis de cette dernière ville, le 20 Août (v. s.), en voiture, sont arrivés à Bagdad le 27 du même mois. Le trajet a donc pris seulement sept jours.

[31865] No. 106.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 24.)

(No. 599.)
Sir,
Therapia, September 19, 1907.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 565 of the 10th instant, I have the honour to report that, according to the Grand Vizier, the Samians have accepted the new Governor—Giorgiadis Bey, and the Commission sent with him have returned to Constantinople fully satisfied with the results obtained. It appears that the late Prince Karatheodori Bey was incurring considerable debt on behalf of the Administration, proposing to issue paper money, and committing various other irregularities which made his continuance in office impossible.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[32521] No. 107.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 30.)

(No. 602.)
Sir,
Therapia, September 20, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a report from Mr. Vice-Consul Heard on a journey which I authorized him to undertake from Diarbekir to Jeziré in the month of July. Mr. Heard has been prevented by stress of work at Bitlis from completing the report sooner.

The latter part contains an interesting account of his visit to Ibrahim Pasha, with whom he suggests that an arrangement might possibly be made for the protection of Christians.

I have told Mr. Heard in reply that all he can do at present is to express to the Pasha my appreciation of his fairmindedness towards people of every race and religion, and of the fact that he practises those principles of toleration and justice which are the special characteristics of the British Government in their relations with Mussulmans throughout the vast British Empire, and my hope that he will continue in the same path.

The inclosures in Mr. Heard's despatch, which were of a technical nature, have been forwarded direct by Colonel Surtees to the Intelligence Department of the War Office.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 107.

Vice-Consul Heard to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 13.)

Sir, *Kharpout, July* 17, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Excellency the following report on my journey from Diarbekir to Jeziré (8th–27th June), inclosing—

(*a.*) List of Tigris villages and tribes, with observations on the river traffic; and
(*b.*) Road report on my journey from Jeziré to Diarbekir.

I found the neighbourhood of Jeziré to be in a very disturbed condition owing to the intertribal disputes of the Kurds, which were causing much distress to the Christian population.

Mansouri.

The Chaldean village of Mansouri, about one hour upstream from Jeziré on the left bank of the Tigris, had been deserted, and the villagers were afraid even to reap their harvest, the reason for their flight being briefly as follows:—

The Batwan tribe has for some time been divided into two rival sections—one under Amir-i-Temer Aga, the other under Mahomed-i-Mesté and Mahomed-i-Yunnes. About four months ago the former sent sixty men to take the village, whereupon the latter prevailed upon the Kaïmakam of Aro (Sanjak of Sert, Bitlis Vilayet) to take it from him. On the 28th April the Kaïmakam ordered Amir-i-Temer's men to evacuate, and a conflict ensued. Troops under a Yuzbashi were then summoned, and a five hours' fight took place, in which three soldiers were severely wounded, and Amir-i-Temer's men were driven out. Three villagers were afterwards shot in cold blood, it is stated, in revenge for the wounding of the soldiers, and the remainder of the inhabitants, finding the situation intolerable, fled to Jeziré.

The Kaïmakam of Jeziré gave as an excuse for his non-interference the swollen state of the river, which was, on the face of it, absurd. Although a village in his district had been forcibly occupied by an official from another vilayet, he had not even reported the matter to the Vali. He promised to ask for a detachment of twenty soldiers to be sent for the protection of the Mansouri villagers, and I understand that they have been sent, though whether they will be allowed to remain is doubtful.

Aro Villages.

In the neighbourhood of Mansouri, but lying within the Kaza of Aro, Bitlis Vilayet, the following villages have been deserted and the inhabitants dispersed:—

	Houses.
Deir Foukani	40
Deir Tahtani	20
Jinnet	25
Dohôk	10
Birka	10
Zeh	5

These villages are said to have been deserted since February, in consequence of the continual fighting of the Batwan and Sharnak tribes, who were competing for their possession. Meanwhile the villagers had to pay for the food, transport, ammunition, &c., of the rival clans, until finally they left in despair.

The Vali of Diarbekir told me that at one time the plan had been contemplated of sending a force with mountain guns to sweep down the river-bank and punish the turbulent tribes, beginning with the Batwan, but that the execution of the scheme had been deferred as inopportune. It is unnecessary to point out what an excellent effect such a measure would have had in inspiring some respect for the Government in this disorderly region, and insuring some degree of security for the Christian population.

Shakh and Hassana.

The two villages of Shakh (thirty houses) and Hassana (forty Protestant and twenty Chaldean houses), some three hours from Jeziré, were being emptied of their inhabitants in consequence of the oppression of the Sharnakh tribe under the Aga-i-Zor. The Kaïmakam of Jeziré promised to have a detachment of soldiers sent for their protection, but, so far as I know, never mentioned the subject to the Vali.

It would appear that much of the intertribal fighting in this region, which has such a disastrous effect on the Christian population, is fomented by Abdul Kerim for his own ends. Thus, the rivalries of the Batwan tribe and the antagonism between the Aga-i-Zor and his nephews Abdurrahman and Yussuf (partisans of Osman Effendi), are stated to be his work.

Silopi Villages.

The three Chaldean villages of the Silopi district, namely—

	Houses.
Takyan	50
Nehervan	20 (now deserted)
Gherik Bedro	40

have for some time past been oppressed by the Tayan (Hamidié) tribe of Abdul Kerim. Last year fifty soldiers were established at Takyan for its protection in accordance with an Imperial Iradé (Mr. Vice-Consul Shipley's No. 34 of the 17th October, 1906). Four months ago these were greatly reduced, and had since fluctuated between six and twelve men, when I drew the attention of the Kaïmakam to the fact. I believe that the detachment has since been restored to its original strength, but it is worthy of note that the Jeziré authorities did not even consider an Imperial Iradé as requiring their obedience.

Osman Effendi.

Osman Effendi, the chief man in Jeziré, has at last found that his position is no longer tenable, owing to his quarrel with his brother-in-law Abdul Kerim, and he left for Zakho ten days before my arrival, with seventy or eighty families. It was said that seventy more families were only awaiting Abdul Kerim's departure to follow him. The Kaïmakam of Jeziré, owing to his fear of Abdul Kerim, reduced the wholesale emigration to seven persons in reporting the matter to the Vali.

The general impression I gathered at Jeziré during my few days' stay there was that Abdul Kerim is absolute master in that region. The Kaïmakam, the Hamidié Bimbashi, the Chaldean Bishop, all are his creatures, and obey him blindly. In my interviews with them I was greatly struck by their inability to do anything but lie, which they did to an extent remarkable even for this country, and I afterwards found out that the Vali had no idea of what was happening in Jeziré, as they either arranged their reports to suit Abdul Kerim or else did not report at all. The Kaïmakam himself is a feeble person, who is longing to be removed from the difficult position he now holds, and I believe his transfer is imminent. His predecessor, who had a bad reputation in Diarbekir, appears not to have been a bad official, but a man of some character, who did not get on with Abdul Kerim. The Chaldean Bishop in consequence was told to send a petition for his removal to Diarbekir, alleging all kinds of malpractices against him.

As long as intertribal warfare continues in the Jeziré district, and Abdul Kerim's power remains paramount, it is to be feared that the Christians must continue to suffer or desert their villages. The garrison at Jeziré is small (200), and it will be difficult to keep detachments of soldiers permanently stationed in the villages for their protection. The Vali cannot obtain reliable information of what is going on, or insure the execution of his orders, and even the Chaldean Bishop cannot be depended on to report the oppression of his flock, and the local authorities, if they do not become creatures of Abdul Kerim, are impotent against him.

Abdul Kerim's position appears to be unassailable. Complaints against him must pass through the Mushir's hands before action is taken, and the latter has evidently been instructed to treat him with the greatest indulgence. The Vali of Diarbekir informed me that on one occasion, when troops were sent to surround him, they were recalled by order of the Mushir.

At Jeziré, Abdul Kerim received Mr. Lloyd and myself with considerable ceremony, coming out at the head of a large body of horsemen to meet us outside his camp. These attentions were probably designed to remove the bad impression caused by the attack on the French Vice-Consul on his way to Mosul last year.

He gives the impression of a man of brutal nature and no very great intelligence. Any reflections on his conduct would naturally have been ill received, and I merely pointed out to him that the squabbles of the Kurdish Agas for the possession of the Christian villages only resulted in the ruin of the latter, to the loss of the parties concerned, illustrating my remarks by a modified version of the fable of the goose and the golden eggs.

As already remarked, a punitive expedition sent to chastise the most turbulent of the Kurdish tribes in this region would seem to be the best method for restoring some

measure of security to the Christians. Failing this, it would be well if the garrison at Jeziré could be increased to enable detachments to be maintained in the villages most in need of protection. An occasional visit from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van or Diarbekir would seem to be the only method of ascertaining the true situation at Jeziré and the manner in which promises to protect the Christians are being carried out.

Nissibin and Mardin.

The country between Jeziré and Nissibin has suffered much from the depredations of Abdul Kerim (as far as Baterzan), and of the Tai Arabs (as far as Nissibin), as the many deserted villages and the lack of cultivation testify. The latter are now under the youthful Chiefs, Sheikh Suleiman, 18 years old, and Sheikh Abdu Rezak, 16 years. The former is only a "Nefer" of Hamidié.

They are assisted by Government against the Fedaga, Sabita, and Abda sub-tribes of the Shammar, who are allies of Ibrahim Pasha.

It is characteristic of the Government policy of *divide et impera* that Ibrahim Pasha is in his turn assisted against the Kherissa, Amoud, and Aleya sub-tribes of the Shammar, who are friends of the Tai.

The sedentary Kurds and Syrians in the neighbourhood of Nissibin are much oppressed by the Tai, who are particularly wild and lawless, but their complaints receive no attention at Nissibin, where the local authorities seem to be as subservient to the Tai as Jeziré is to Abdul Kerim. I saw their tents pitched beside the villages along the line of route, and they apparently help themselves to anything they want in the way of grain, &c.

The country between Nissibin and Mardin is held by the Dakori and Kiki, who are allies of Ibrahim Pasha, and are consequently protected from aggression.

This region appears to be more settled, and there was more cultivation. At Gherharin, in the plain below Mardin, there were one or two Circassians employed by Ibrahim Pasha to take caravans on as far as Nissibin, charging 5 piastres per load for the protection thus granted. Under their guidance, but not otherwise, caravans are safe, but after Nissibin the roads are impossible for caravans without Government escort.

Things in Mardin were quiet, though until recently robberies had been very common in the town. These had been put a stop to by the Mutessarif on orders from the Vali. Friendly relations appeared to exist between Christians and Moslems, and the fact that the "speech day" of the missionary school had been attended by a number of important Mahommedans seemed to indicate that anti-Christian feeling is dormant in the town. The plain region west of Mardin, where Ibrahim Pasha's territory begins, was far more cultivated than any I had seen, and the Kurds, secure against aggression, seemed prosperous and contented.

Visit to Ibrahim Pasha.

I found Ibrahim Pasha encamped at Helléli, about one day's march from Veranshehr. Immense droves of camels and numerous herds of cattle and sheep covered the plains. The tribesmen were slowly moving north in search of fresh grazing. A representative from each of the tribes was present in the camp, and I was told that his whole available fighting force could be summoned in a week.

The Pasha received me in his usual polite and courteous fashion, and I was much struck by his dignified bearing and intelligence. We discussed many things, from the position of the Sheikh of Koweit to motor-cars and the Bagdad Railway, in all of which matters he displayed keen interest.

I gathered that since he has made his peace with a portion of the Shammar tribe and has absorbed the Karagetchi he was now consolidating his position, and wished to develop his great possessions in peace and quiet. At Veranshehr, which I was unfortunately unable to visit, I am told that he has settled a large number of Armenians, who work at various handicrafts, and are very well treated, as are all the Christians who fly to him for protection. He informed me that he had registered in his name large tracts of country on the future line of the Bagdad Railway, and that he has recently set up a flour-mill, worked by petroleum. In thus developing his country he displays a prudence and foresight which contrast sharply with the aimless raiding and devastation of other Kurdish Chieftains. The security of the roads and the tranquillity which for over a year has reigned in regions which were formerly in a state of perpetual commotion is, in my humble opinion, due to the fact that his enemies now fear to attack him. His only formidable foes are now the Baraza Kurds and Anizé Arabs, who lie far to the south-west of Diarbekir. I congratulated him on

the tranquil state of his country, and remarked on the contrast between the disturbed regions I had just left and the flourishing condition of the lands under his protection. I had, I said, heard much about him in Diarbekir, and very little in his favour, but that I believed my eyes and not my ears, and as long as I saw him treating the Christians with toleration and insuring the safety of the roads, which were the two matters in which I was chiefly interested, I should disbelieve the reports of his enemies.

With regard to the protection of the Christians, I said he was no doubt aware that there were certain very evil-disposed persons in Diarbekir who were always trying to make trouble and looking for a chance to provoke a massacre, and I asked him if he would use his influence to keep them in check. The Pasha expressed the greatest detestation for these persons, the so-called "Eshreffs" and "Hanédans" (Notables and men of family) of Diarbekir, and promised that as far as his own people were concerned he would prevent their assisting in such doings. He also said that he would use his influence in Diarbekir and Mardin to prevent, as far as lay in his power, any movement against the Christians.

I observed that most of these Notables possessed property outside the town, from which they drew their wealth, and the knowledge that this was exposed to attack and that Ibrahim Pasha had power to damage their interests would exercise a very salutary check upon them should they meditate an attack on the Christians. The Pasha seemed quite disposed to accept this view of the question; and I would here venture to inquire whether your Excellency would consider it desirable that His Majesty's Vice-Consul should invoke the assistance of Ibrahim Pasha, should the authorities at any time fail to control the lawless elements and a massacre seem imminent. Such an eventuality is always possible, though I am glad to say that at present there are no signs of any such serious trouble. The Local Government could hardly complain if, after having shown its incapacity to keep order, as it did on one notable occasion two years ago, external and more powerful assistance were invited. If your Excellency approves of such an understanding being made with Ibrahim Pasha, I could let him know that if ever serious trouble were threatened His Majesty's Vice-Consul would send him word and request him to make a demonstration in the neighbourhood. It is probable that the mere appearance of Ibrahim Pasha's tribesmen in the vicinity of the Eshreffs' property would suffice to bring them to their senses. The Pasha, for his own sake, would be careful to keep his men well in hand, and not permit them to extend their depredations too far. I have heard it said that were Ibrahim Pasha made Vali of Diarbekir he would soon reduce it to a state of order that no stranger appointed from Constantinople would ever succeed in doing.

He related at great length the history of his rise to power, and explained why it was that he treated his people well and protected the Christians. He had, he said, inherited little from his father, and, unlike those spendthrift sons who are born rich, he had to build up his fortune with care. Thus he protected the Christians in his own interest, as a source of wealth. In the days of his grandfather, said the Pasha, all the tribes of the Milli were under him, but he had lost his influence some sixty years ago. The tribes then fell into the hands of the Eshreffs of Diarbekir, Mardin, and Aleppo. Now, however, that he has become the Colonel of five Hamidié regiments with from 20,000 to 30,000 guns, the tribes have all come over to him from the Eshreffs. Hence their bitter hostility against him and their intrigues for his fall.

On the occasion, two years ago, when the Notables of Diarbekir got possession of the telegraph office and compelled the Vali to telegraph to Constantinople asking for the disgrace of Ibrahim Pasha (Mr. A. Shipley's Nos. 26 and 27 of the 7th and 12th August, 1905), the Pasha informed me that they had at the same time invited him to come to the town, where they had arranged a massacre, intending subsequently to throw the blame on him, as they had tried to do before. He indignantly refused, and wrote to the Vali saying that these men were not really Hanédan, but the sons of persons of ill-repute.

The Pasha observed that he understood that His Majesty's Vice-Consul had taken the part of the Eshreffs against him on that occasion, which is incorrect, as will be seen from the despatches above mentioned.

He said, moreover, that he was always ready to protect the Christians against aggression, but that he preferred to do it on the invitation of the authorities, lest his enemies should misrepresent his action. Thus on one occasion, when Abdul Kader Pasha, his representative at Mardin, sent word to ask him to protect some village against the Kurds, he abstained from doing so until the request was confirmed by the Mutessarif.

As regards the security of communications, the Pasha said that he could

guarantee the safety of the roads throughout his country, and the road between Severek and Urfa was now open to the attacks of the Dugherli, Ghez, and Baraza tribes only. He added that he would be very glad to guarantee the safety of this section if ordered by the Sultan, but as this would entail the subjugation of these tribes I judged it best not to discuss the matter further. As regards the toll paid by caravans for protection in his country, he assured me that it was merely something nominal to pay for the keep of the escort. I fear, however, that I cannot quite credit this, and there is little doubt in my mind that the Pasha makes considerable sums out of his caravan traffic. However, even this would appear to be a great improvement on the state of things prevalent in recent years, when caravans were systematically pillaged and the roads often closed for weeks at a time.

(Confidential.)

Shortly before my departure the Pasha invited me to his tent to discuss something particularly secret and confidential. He then proceeded to praise the British Government and declare the particular affection with which he had of late years regarded my country. He was evidently waiting for some encouragement from me, but beyond expressing my gratification for these tokens of his esteem, and assuring him that my Government would regard with pleasure the new era of peace and tranquillity which he had inaugurated in his country, I did not feel myself justified in leading him on to the definite proposals which I suspect he desired to make.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. B. HEARD.

[32524] No. 108.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 30.)

(No. 606.)

Sir, *Therapia, September 24, 1907.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 570 of the 13th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a Report from Mr. Acting Consul Wilkie Young on the recent disturbances at Erzeroum. In a further telegram from Mr. Young of the 15th instant, he states that the Vali is awaiting instructions from Constantinople before taking any action, and that in the opinion of himself and his French and Russian colleagues, who have also telegraphed to their Embassies, it is indispensable that the murderer should be arrested and the responsible official punished.

I have made representations on the subject to the Grand Vizier, who has telegraphed to the Vali to take energetic measures.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 108.

Acting Consul Young to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 58.)

Sir, *Erzeroum, September 11, 1907.*

I HAVE to confirm the telegrams which I had the honour to address to your Excellency yesterday and the day before, and beg leave to submit herewith a more detailed account of the regrettable incidents to which they referred.

On Monday morning, the 9th instant, between 8 and 9 o'clock, six or seven persons went to the shop of a certain Kighili Krikor Effendi, an Armenian Protestant, placed a native belt—or perhaps some yards of cotton stuff, such as is often wound round the fez—round his neck by way of a halter and dragged him into the street. A crowd collected and continued to increase in numbers as the unfortunate man was hounded through the principal streets of the town, while those who led him struck him with clubs. Eventually, but only after a period of suffering variously estimated at between half-an-hour and an hour, he was literally done to death in the open market in the quarter known as Tabriz Kapoussi. The body was subsequently stripped of everything but a shirt and drawers, and thrown into a filthy ditch on the outskirts of the Christian quarter, where it was seen later by the dragoman of this Consulate.

No attempt at rescue or interference seems to have been made by the police, by the military, or by private individuals, though—as I have said—the revolting procession went through the principal streets of Erzeroum at an hour when they are full of people, and must have passed by at least three caracols. More than this—I am assured, and have every reason to believe, that news of what was being done was taken at once to

the police head-quarters, and that the Chief Commissaire of Police and Mehmet Bey, Colonel commanding the 28th Regiment (who is also Merkez Commandant) were there at the time. They seem to have gone out at once and followed the procession—but only as disinterested spectators; and it is incontestable that neither made the slightest attempt to interfere. When the victim finally succumbed, Mehmet Bey is said to have remarked "Ish bitdi—haidi gidelim," *i.e.*, "that's over, let us go" and turned away.

In the evening the relatives of the deceased asked permission to bury the body, which was immediately accorded on the ground that no inquiry was to be held.

In the course of the same morning a Mahommedan, Mustapha Effendi, was severely wounded but escaped with his life; and the house of an Armenian, Balasarian Channes, was broken into by the mob and plundered.

Later in the day a company of infantry was sent to the Christian quarter, which was patrolled until the following morning.

I have been privately informed that the actual murderers of Krikor Effendi were certain hammals employed at the custom-house, and I have no reason to doubt my authority. But whether or not my information is exact, the local authorities, did they wish to do so, could have no difficulty in identifying the principal actors in a drama which was witnessed by half the population of Erzeroum.

The pretext for these violent acts is an accusation against the victims, and others who have so far escaped, of buying up grain of all kinds with a view to artificially raising prices later in the season.

It is well known to your Excellency that in this part of the Ottoman Empire a condition of relative distress is almost chronic in a large section of the population. There was lately some dissatisfaction caused by the intention of dealers to send a large quantity of wheat over the frontier into Russia, but a compromise was arrived at, and only the wheat, which belonged to a certain Rezvan, a Russian subject, was allowed to go, the rest being detained on this side of the frontier. When, however, it was discovered that the position was to be again endangered, with the certainty of prohibitive prices, by individuals in Erzeroum itself, it probably required little to fire the popular imagination and prepare the way for any sort of lawlessness. It is said that a deputation had approached the Vali begging him to intervene and take measures to restrict the operations of the dealers and keep the price of corn at a reasonable figure; but his Excellency assures me that this is not so, and that he "had merely heard a rumour that some such petition was being prepared for presentation to him."

Nouri Bey is an astute Cretan, and, as I have already had the honour to report to your Excellency, his desire is to be transferred from Erzeroum, and until he can arrange this, I think the first consideration with him is to avoid friction with all parties and save himself from worry and possible danger by a masterly inactivity. I am therefore inclined to think it likely that his Excellency was approached, and that he put off his petitioners with vague promises or protestations of ability to interfere. However that may have been, the other side maintain that it was only after invoking his help and finding that it was not forthcoming that they took the law into their own hands, and they say that, before doing so, they warned him of the consequences of his inaction.

As regards the attitude of the local authorities during and since the incidents referred to, I had conversations with the Vali and also with Ahmed Pasha, commanding the VIIth Division, in the course of the afternoon. The former, with apparent reason, blames the military for their sympathy with the mob, and lays special stress upon the entirely disgraceful part taken by Colonel Mehmet Bey (mentioned above), he being Merkez Commandant, and one of the most influential officers here; while Ahmed Pasha, also I think with much reason, blames the Vali for not foreseeing and preventing the situation.

How far the Revolutionary Committee are implicated is not clear, but the probability is on the side of their having inspired the movement, if not the criminal violence which followed. It is said that other individuals, at present in hiding, are marked down for the vengeance of the mob; and in view of the fact that no arrests have been made, there is poor security against some fresh outburst of lawlessness possibly quite unconnected with the motives of the last.

To sum up, the civil authority would seem to be powerless, and the military are in unquestionable sympathy with the bulk of the population. The attitude of neither is to be wondered at, seeing that the former have constantly in their minds the rough treatment suffered by themselves or their predecessors last October at the hands of the mob; while the latter, through long association in suffering and discontent, are one with the poorer classes in their aspirations for radical change.

In face of such conditions measures will have to be strong if things are not to go their way here and throughout the district; but to begin with, and by way of a salutary example, I venture humbly to submit that it is much to be desired that the two individuals mentioned above, viz., the Chief Commissaire of Police and Colonel Mehmet Bey be promptly transferred to some other district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. E. WILKIE YOUNG.

[32529] No. 109.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 30.)

(No. 611.)
Sir, *Therapia, September 24, 1907.*

IN continuation of my despatch No. 571 of the 13th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a further report by Mr. Heard on the state of affairs in the Vilayet of Bitlis.

I shall communicate a précis of the contents to the Grand Vizier, and urge his Highness to deal with the main evils to which it calls attention.

I have already pointed out the dangers attending the absence of Tahir Pasha from the vilayet at this juncture.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 109.

Vice-Consul Heard to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 5.)
Sir, *Bitlis, September 3, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to report as follows upon the present situation in this vilayet:—

The Sheikhs of Bitlis continue to hold secret meetings. It is reported, I cannot say with what truth, that one of the principal subjects of debate is the question of the Hamidié, whose lawless conduct is causing general exasperation. It is said that, prompted by the people of Erzeroum, they are going to join in a general protest against the liberty accorded to the Hamidié, and call for the removal of Zekki Pasha, Mushir of the 4th Army Corps.

The roads are at present unsafe for caravans in consequence of the lack of protection afforded by Government.

About a week ago a caravan was attacked near Pav, at the eastern end of the Mush Plain, by Tchukurli Kurds. It got through safely, and arrived with its load perforated by bullet holes.

Some six weeks ago the caravan of a certain Abdul Kader, of Urfa, was attacked by Sabit Bey, Hamidié Captain of the Muro (sub-tribe of the Hasannanli), near Perkhus, in Akhlat. He was robbed of some £T. 560, which he had brought to purchase cattle with. Miss Shattuck, of the American Mission at Urfa, who was, it seems, in partnership with this man, has asked me to do what I can for him. The Acting Vali has promised to apply a second time to the Palace and the Mushir, his previous messages on the subject having produced no result.

Two days ago a caravan of seven persons was robbed by Modky Kurds in the Tchiliftra Pass, close to Bitlis.

One result of the insecurity of the roads is that it tends to still further increase the price of corn. Thus, if the roads are blocked for a day it may rise 1 or 2 piastres per cód (33½ lbs.).

I am informed that grain has risen in price during the last four years to the following extent:—

	Corn.	Barley.
	Piastres.	Piastres.
1903 .. .. (per cód)	5	2½
1905 . .. . ,,	10–12	6
1907 .. .. ,,	16–18	12

The fact that less grain has been sown this year in consequence of false hopes raised by the Russian emigration scheme cannot fail to maintain the high price of corn. The town population, impoverished by the earthquake and the stagnation of trade, is likely to suffer much during the coming winter. Many well-to-do families are deserting the town.

A group of speculators, the so-called "Compania" of Bitlis, has taken advantage of this state of things to force up the price of grain. The chief promoters are five in number, but they are said to have agents all over the country. They are assisted in their dealings by the Salafdars and Multezims, who are likely to oppose strongly any reforms touching their prerogatives. The latter are even now trying to prevent the villagers from buying their own tithes. Two instances of their behaviour in this sense were recently brought to my notice.

A villager of Gamakh complained to me that though the inhabitants were able and willing to buy their own tithes, the Reis and the priest, under the influence of Sadullah Effendi, the Director of Passports, were preventing them from purchasing them. The latter had sent his agent to the village, who was even then assessing the tithes against the desires of the villagers. The Acting Vali, at my instance, sent some soldiers to prevent them, but before the villagers had understood for what purpose they had been sent, the Reis told them that the village had agreed to sell their tithes to the agent in question, whereupon they retired. I asked the complainant if the villagers could not compel their own Reis carry out their wishes, to which he replied that the Reis was afraid of Sadullah Effendi, and that unless I could protect him from future retaliation he did not think he would dare to oppose the will of the latter. I was unable to give him any such guarantee and advised him to send a Petition signed by the entire population to the Acting Vali, stating that the village was anxious to buy its own tithes.

Another village, Pur, seemed to be in the same case, and I advised their representative to send a similar Petition, promising my support.

It is difficult to help these people, when, in spite of the Government's order, the local Notables prevent them from availing themselves of any reforms made for their benefit.

I was informed yesterday that a deputation of six exiles wish to wait upon me. I stated that I was not authorized to receive such deputations, but that I was always ready to receive private visits from, say, one or two individuals. Two of their number then called and stated that the Defterdar, after taking receipts for their month's salaries, had refused to give them a penny. They complained of his previous harshness to them, alleging that up till now none of them had received more than half the salaries allotted to them by Government. They asked if I would send a telegram for them to the Palace, as they were debarred from the telegraph office themselves. I replied that this was *extra vires*, but said that I would mention the matter to your Excellency, warning them at the same time that I could not promise that anything would be done for them.

I add a list of their names and salaries:—

	Piastres.
Shevki Bey (native of Silouica)	1,000
Lutfi Effendi (late Palace official)	1,000
Derviah Bey (Bosniak)	500
Ferid Bey (Diarbekir)	500
Ekrem Bey (Constantinople)	500
Salih Aga (late gardener of Reshad Effendi)	200

I understand that they have been exiled for political reasons, and the Vice-Consular dragoman is unaware that they have committed any offence deserving a reduction of salary. As such appeals for assistance on the part of exiles are not unlikely to occur again, may I ask your Excellency to be good enough to inform me whether it is desirable that I should give them attention or not?

I am inclined to believe that the refusal to pay the exiles' salaries may simply be due to lack of funds. If the Treasury is low they would naturally be the first to feel the pinch.

The dragoman of the Vice-Consulate called to-day at the Konak, and was informed by the Acting Vali's Aide-de-camp that his Excellency had failed to put in an appearance owing to the fact that a number of officers and zaptiehs were awaiting him to demand the payment of their salaries. The officers are requiring money in place of "seneds," or drafts on local treasuries.

This system of payment by "seneds" has many evil results, one of them being, as I am informed, that it assists the tithe-farmers to outbid the villagers. If a

"Multezim" wishes to bid for the tithes of a village, he will first of all provide himself with "seneds" from various unpaid officials, giving, say, 250 piastres cash down for a "sened," the face value of which is 500 piastres. The villagers of course are obliged to pay the full value, but the tithe-farmer may pay the Government in its own "seneds" at their face value. By this means the "Multzeim" may be able to bid for tithes worth, say, 10,000 piastres at an actual outlay of 5,000 piastres. Until tithe-farming is entirely forbidden, it would seem as though the "Multezims" are bound to keep the tithes more or less in their own hands.

I have received a letter from the Diarbekir dragoman, written from Sert, where I had told him to stop and report, your Excellency's telegram of the 29th August authorizing him to return direct to Diarbekir not having arrived until after his departure.

With regard to the disorders amongst the Bohtan tribes, he reports that on the 5th and 14th August Mohamed-i-Mesté and Mohamed-i-Yunes of the Batwan tribe, and several other Chiefs of the Garisan (?) and Shernakh tribes, had again attacked the Chaldean village of Dobok (see Diarbekir despatch No. 13 of the 17th July). The village was looted, stock robbed, and several houses were burned. Twelve persons were killed, including the priest.

The Chaldean Bishop of Jezireh informed me in June that the village was deserted. Presumably the inhabitants had returned to gather their harvest. Amir-i-Temer, the owner of Dobok, in revenge then attacked two Chaldean villages belonging to Mohamed-i-Mesté, namely, Deir Foukani and Yunat (Jinnat?). The former was burned, and four persons were killed in each of these villages.

The Chaldean Acting Bishop has telegraphed twice to the Vali of Bitlis, and the Chaldean, Armenian, and Syrian Bishops (of Sairt?) have also informed the First Secretary of the Palace, but no reply has been received. It is said that the inhabitants of three neighbouring villages are deserting their homes in consequence of these troubles.

He reports the usual injustices in regard to the collection of tithes and taxes, all of which the villagers have to pay two or three times over.

Three months ago, he says, an inquiry was received from Constantinople as to the number of condemned Kurdish criminals at large. The local judicial authorities replied that they numbered 30,000. Only 250 have been arrested and put in prison. Even allowing a liberal margin for exaggeration, it would seem that the authority of the Government is not upheld with much vigour in Sert.

The Chaldean village of Sadugh, five hours from Sert, is said to be in the hands of one Abdulkerim of Suleimanie (?), and twelve families, including the priest, are reported to have emigrated in consequence of his oppression. Piroz, a Chaldean village in Bervari Kaza, is stated to be occupied by Isa-Muhe-e-Shabi Oghlou, and the Chaldean villages of Upper and Lower Hartafun are said to be in the hands of other Kurdish Agas. No attention has been paid to the villagers' complaints.

Soldiers have been sent to pacify the Kurds of Kharzan Kaza, who are fighting (specially the Alikan).

The Kaimakam of Aro, who had attacked the village of Mansourié (see my despatch above referred to), is still maintained in office.

The people of Sert, affected, perhaps, by the "Separatist" movement in Mush, are anxious to be removed from Bitlis and attached to Diarbekir.

The departure of Tahir Pasha at the present moment is most unfortunate, as the Defterdar appears to possess neither the energy nor the prestige necessary to keep order or introduce reform. If your Excellency has any information as to when Tahir Pasha is likely to return, I would respectfully request that I may be informed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. B. HEARD.

[32535] No. 110.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received September* 30.)

(No. 617)
Sir,
Therapia, September 25, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to report that an Imperial Iradé has been issued for the despatch of a Commission to inquire into the general condition of the Vilayets of Mosul, Bagdad, and Bussorah, and to report on the measures which it may be possible to adopt for the pacification and settlement of the nomad and other tribes, the improvement of their condition, and the development, by means of irrigation or otherwise, of the agricultural and other natural resources of the country.

The Commission, which will start shortly for Mesopotamia, will consist of Nazim Pasha, the Vali of Castamouni, Kemal Bey, ex-Defterdar of the Vilayet of Aidin, an Ulema named Avni Effendi, an Inspector of Justice, and several representatives of the Land Registry Department and of various local interests.

At Major Ramsay's suggestion I endeavoured to have an irrigation expert with experience of such work in Egypt attached to the Commission, but the answer given was that an English engineer could only be attached if the Commission themselves showed the necessity for having one. I am, however, making private inquiries in Cairo with a view to a man being at hand in case of an opportunity occurring for his employment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[32536] No. 111.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received September* 30.)

(No. 618.)
Sir,
Constantinople, September 25, 1907.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 257 of the 30th April, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Damascus on the subject of affairs in the Nejd.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 111.

Consul Devey to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 33.)
Sir,
Damascus, September 6, 1907.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 18 of the 15th April last, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that the informations reaching here concur to substantiate the report about the successful policy of Sultan Ibn Rashid, who seems to be superseding Ibn Sooud among the different tribes of the Nejd. It would appear that the party of Ibn Rashid is increasing at the expense of his rival, and that the policy he has adopted shows that he has wider ambition than that of being Emir of Hail. He is communicating with the Druses of the Jebel-Hauran through his agent at Jauf, Sheikh Salih-el-Muzeini, avowing to them eternal friendship and strong alliance, to say nothing of his promises and expressed devotion to the tribes of Anezah, Muteir, Oteibeh, and the natives of Kassim. At the present moment he is in Hail endeavouring to strengthen his position and organize his forces.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. P. DEVEY.

[32537] No. 112.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received September* 30.)

(No. 619.)
Sir,
Constantinople, September 25, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Damascus on the subject of the inauguration of the Medain-Salih section of the Hejaz Railway.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 112.

Consul Devey to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 31.)

Sir, *Damascus, September 4, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that the Imperial Commission sent from Constantinople for the inauguration of that section of the Hejaz Railway constructed during the last year since the 1st September, 1906, arrived here on the 22nd ultimo, and after stopping in this city five days started on the 27th on two trains to Medain-Salih and El-Ola, where they held the inauguration ceremonies on the 1st instant, the anniversary of the Sultan's Accession Day, and returned the next day, entraining for Haifa. They will later proceed from Beirout viâ Aleppo and Erekli to Constantinople. The Commission consists of Ferik Auler Pasha, Ferik Jevad Pasha, Ismaïl Hakki Bey, and Ali Nouri Bey, the last two being sons of his Excellency the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs. They were accompanied to their destination at El-Ola by Mushir Kyazim Pasha, Nazir of the Construction, Mushir Ali Riza Pash, Nazir of Traffic, Abdurrahman Pasha Muhafizul-Hajj, and about 100 others of dignitaries and officials.

Since the 1st September, 1906, the rails have been laid from Tebouk to El-Ola, which is about 30 kilom. south of Medain-Salih. The stations, building or proposed, on this section are: Tebouk (692nd kilom.), Wadi Athel (720th kilom.), Darul-Hajj (744th kilom.), Mustabka (755th kilom.), Hamis (782nd kilom.), Dezad (805th kilom.) Moaddem (828th kilom.), Hishm-Sana (853rd kilom.), Dar-el-Hamra (880th kilom.), El-Mutaab (904th kilom.), Abu-Taker (918th kilom.), El-Mushim (930th kilom.), Medain-Salih (953rd kilom.), and El-Ola (about 980th kilom.).

The earthworks on 40 kilom. beyond El-Ola are being completed, while 44 kilom. more are prepared for work as regards plans and profiles. From the other end, at Medina, 4 kilom. are already finished and 46 kilom. are being laid out.

The number of troops working on the line from this side to El-Ola and beyond is about 5,000, while three battalions are working at the other end from Medina, all being in good health and receiving their pay regularly.

The stations are not built yet, except at Hamis, where a blockhouse is nearly finished, and in a few other places the foundations have been laid and cisterns for water constructed. At El-Moaddem there is an ancient reservoir which contains in its present condition 11,000 cubic metres of water, but if it would be cleaned and repaired it will have a capacity of 16,000 cubic metres.

According to an opinion expressed by the Mushir Kyazim Pasha, Nazir of Construction, the troops between Medain and El-Ola could lay down 4 kilom. of rails in one day.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. P. DEVEY.

[32538] No. 113.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 30.)

(No. 620.)

Sir, *Constantinople, September 25, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Jeddah, reporting the departure for the Yemen of a Turkish Commission of Inquiry.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 113.

Consul Monahan to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 28.)

Sir, *Jeddah, September 12, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to report that on the 9th instant three of the four Muftis of Mecca, seven Ulema of that town, and a Turkish official described as the Secretary at Mecca of the Vali of the Hejaz, left Jeddah for Hodeida by the "Khedivié" mail steamer on a Mission to Yemen from the Turkish Government. It is understood that

they are to exhort the insurgents to submission. The seven Ulema are respected as learned men. The three Muftis, who are comparatively young, appear to have less personal reputation, though, of course, their official position gives them weight. Not much result seems to be expected from the Mission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. MONAHAN.

[32539] No. 114.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received September 30.)

(No. 621.)

Sir, *Therapia, September 25, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from Mr. Crow, reporting on the observations made to him by the Vali of Bussorah on the lamentable condition of affairs in his vilayet. Coming from such a source the statements are all the more striking, and I shall endeavour to present a faithful picture of the situation to the Grand Vizier, with a view to the adoption of such remedial measures as may be possible, either with the help of the Commission referred to in my despatch No. 617 or otherwise.

The gun-boat scheme, mentioned at the end of the despatch, is that referred to in my despatch No. 427 of the 18th July.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 114.

Consul Crow to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 55. Confidential.)

Sir, *Bussorah, August 28, 1907.*

THE Vali of Bussorah, in a recent conversation with my dragoman, gave the latter his views regarding the present condition of affairs in this province. As a side-light on current events the Vali's statement is not without interest, and I give it in substance as follows:—

The state of the vilayet is going from bad to worse, and the authorities are powerless to remedy it. The administrative difficulties encountered cause grave anxiety. Intertribal fighting among the Arabs is on the increase, with the natural result that the navigation of the river is endangered and traffic constantly interrupted. The tribes, clinging with a primitive conservatism to their traditional habits, settle their disputes among themselves, and in their own way. Intervention by the local authorities is resented, and when exercised does not tend to promote the permanent restoration of peace. The local authorities are placed in a quandary owing to the attitude maintained by the Imperial Government towards the tribal question. They are unable to assert themselves, or make their power felt. The Arabs, fully aware of the unwillingness of the Government to employ force, take advantage of its irresoluteness, and, turning a deaf ear to all remonstrances of the local authorities, become wholly insubordinate. The instructions issued to the Liwa of Montifik to punish refractory tribes remain inoperative, as the forces at the disposal of the local authorities are inadequate to carry them out. The military authorities are not in sympathy with the Vali, and do not share his views. They render him no proper assistance, and often oppose him. The financial condition of the vilayet is even worse than the administrative. The unrecovered taxes for last year in the Sanjak of Montifik alone amount to £T. 70,000. The Government Agents are unable to lease lands in that district. The leading Sheikhs fix their own price and give the lands to whom they choose, while the local authorities remain in forced inactivity, and are compelled to accept their arrangements, having no power to effect any other. Even when rent falls due, and attempts are made to collect it, the tribal Chiefs delay full payment and put off the authorities from day to day. Threats are met with open opposition, and, on the slightest pretext, the Arabs create disturbances in order to force the hands of Government. So the local authorities refrain from exercising their authority, and compromise the differences, appeasing the refractory Sheikhs with presents of money and robes of honour. Owing to some private quarrel, the Sheikhs of Medina and Nchedat recently

collected their forces and waged open warfare against each other. Many persons were killed on both sides. The Turkish corvette, "Kilid Bahar," proceeded to the scene of action, but was unable to enter the Euphrates for want of water. The "Alus" was dispatched to Medina, but retired after firing three blank shots to frighten the combatants. The Arabs, however, are perfectly well aware that the Government will not enforce obedience or employ the military against them. The Turkish Government, by following this disastrous policy and keeping aloof, fosters the independent spirit of the Arab tribes and gradually loses ground. To remedy the situation, the Vali suggests that the military authorities should aid him by carrying out his instructions for the preservation of order in the vilayet. The gun-boat scheme, now under consideration, will materially assist him if the vessels are placed absolutely under his orders. The military have on previous occasions proved themselves incompetent to deal with the difficulty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. E. CROW.

[32737] No. 115.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 1.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of correspondence relative to railway construction in the Aden hinterland.

India Office, September 30, 1907.

Inclosure 1 in No. 115.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Secret.)
Sir, *Simla, August 8, 1907.*

WITH reference to paragraph 4 of your Secret despatch dated the 29th March, 1907, we have the honour to inclose herewith copy of a letter from the Government of Bombay on the subject of railway construction in the Aden hinterland.

2. It appears that the Abdali Sultan is still anxious for a railway to be constructed through his territories, and that he may contemplate proceeding with the project whether we assist him or not. We would therefore inquire whether we are to allow the Sultan to take such measures as he may consider desirable with a view to the construction of a line, and, if so, whether we should assist him with advice as to the best method of securing his object. We presume that, in any case, we should not take steps actively to prevent his making a line, and if it is to be made we think that such advice as we can afford should be placed at his disposal.

We have, &c.
(Signed) MINTO.
KITCHENER.
H. ERLE RICHARDS.
E. N. BAKER.
C. H. SCOTT.
H. ADAMSON.
J. F. FINLAY.
J. O. MILLER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 115.

Government of Bombay to Government of India.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Bombay Castle, July 3, 1907.*

REVERTING to Mr. Holland's Confidential indorsement dated the 4th May, 1907, I am directed to forward, for the information of the Government of India and for any

orders they may deem proper, the accompanying copy of a letter from the Political Resident, Aden, dated the 7th June, 1907, on the subject of railway construction in the Aden hinterland.

Inclosure 3 in No. 115.

Lieutenant-Colonel Legh to Government of Bombay.

(Secret.) *Aden Residency, June 7, 1907.*

WITH reference to the correspondence forwarded for my information and guidance with your indorsement dated the 14th May, 1907, relative to the proposals that have been made for railway construction in the Aden hinterland, I have the honour to request that I may be informed of the particular conditions contained in the draft notification which was forwarded with this office letter dated the 19th November, 1905, to which objection is taken as offering so little inducement to promoters as to entail a risk of friction between the Abdali Sultan and any person who might gain the Concession.

2. I have recently received another letter from the Sultan from which it is evident that he is still most anxious for a railway to be constructed through his limits. And though he naturally desires to secure the utmost personal benefit from the undertaking, I have no doubt that, in his anxiety for the fulfilment of the enterprise during his lifetime, he is prepared to give due weight to any advice that may be given to him regarding such modification of the original conditions as may be deemed necessary to render the undertaking more attractive to would-be promoters.

3. I would at least request that I may be informed myself of the modifications which are deemed expedient.

Inclosure 4 in No. 115.

Mr. Morley to Government of India.

(Secret.)
My Lord, *India Office, September 27, 1907.*

I HAVE considered the Secret letter of your Excellency's Government, in the Foreign Department, dated the 8th August, 1907, on the subject of railway construction in the Aden hinterland.

2. The removal of the British garrison from Dthali and the reversion of our political relations with the tribes to their former position so materially affect the question of railway extension that it will be well to consider all previous proposals at an end and the correspondence closed. The matter can then be reopened on a new basis if hereafter the Abdali Sultan should wish to construct an internal railway. In any case no proposals for extending an Abdali railway into the Aden Settlement or connecting it with its sea-board should be discussed with the Sultan without previous consultation with me. Apart from this, the construction of a line even exclusively within the Abdali territory would also require consideration in connection with any advances to be made by British subjects, and with questions of policy or of a military character on which the British Government, as the protecting Power, has the right to be consulted. But it is not desirable to express any opinion on these matters unless or until the Sultan submits a definite scheme confined to his own territory, which can then be examined by me on its merits.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JOHN MORLEY.

[32745] No. 116.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 1.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 5th instant, relative to the Abu Musa Red Oxide Concession.

India Office, September 30, 1907.

Inclosure 1 in No. 116.

Major Cox to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Bushire, June* 23, 1907.

ABU MUSA Concession. Please see clause 1 of my telegram of the 21st May.

Letter now received from Sheikh states that the concessionnaire has reinforced his miners and refuses to stop mining operations, and shows that force will be necessary to oust him from Abu Musa. The Sheikh is afraid that the result may lead to an inconvenient conflict; and, having regard to the fact that the concessionnaire is a British subject, he begs that Government will either arrange matters themselves or advise him how to proceed. It will be advisable that some explanation of reasons of our inaction should be given to the Sheikh if it is desired that all action for the present should remain in abeyance; otherwise he may think that we cannot support his action in cancellation of the Abu Musa Concession, and that we have receded from the position which we had taken up.

Inclosure 2 in No. 116.

Major Cox to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Bushire, July* 6, 1907.

I AM taking steps to obtain the details as to Abu Musa Concession affair asked for in your telegram of the 27th June.

As the concessionnaire is a British subject it seems natural that we should deter him or warn him, and it would probably suffice if he received a warning from us at the instance of the Sheikh. Supposing, however, that Government do not wish to appear in the matter, I imagine that the Sheikh of Shargah would send over a sufficient number of armed men by dhow to eject the miners, if it were intimated to him that he was at liberty to use force. Having accomplished this he would land the miners at Lingah, if necessary, and would leave on Abu Musa an armed guard.

A preliminary warning should, I presume, be given to the miners through Senior Naval Officer or Residency Agent at Lingah, if they prove, as seems probable, to be Persian subjects. I presume, too, that British ship[s] should stand by to see that no unnecessary force is used. This step might in any case be advisable.

Inclosure 3 in No. 116.

Major Cox to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Bushire, August* 22, 1907.

FROM Residency Agent's report it appears that from ten to fifteen labourers are always at mines, and that when a ship visits island she takes over about eighty men from the Persian coast, and returns them when done with.

The Sheikh states that he can dispatch a boat-load of armed retainers whom he can trust with orders to persuade the miners to quit the island peacefully, and failing this to remove them by force. They would be sent to Lingah direct, if a Lingah dhow were available, otherwise they would be sent viâ Shargah. The present moment would be favourable for action, as, owing to heat of climate, numerical strength of miners is at lowest figure. Is there, before any action is taken, any obligation to address warning to the Persian Government? I hardly think it would be necessary.

[33246] No. 117.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 7.)

(No. 631.)

Sir, *Therapia, October* 1, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to report that I received a telegram from Mr. Vice-Consul Heard on the 20th instant in which he stated that many ruined Armenian families of the Moush district, estimated to number a thousand, intended to desert their homes

before the winter in order to escape starvation. The Bishop's Council had asked Mr. Heard to beg me to transmit by telegram an appeal to the President of the Armenian Benevolent Society at Cairo asking for financial help to prevent the above contingency.

I ascertained from the Armenian Patriarch that, according to his information, destitution was rife not only in the Bitlis Vilayet but also in Van, where bread had gone up 200 per cent., and that the prospects of help were bad. The Caucasus Armenians, who used to give assistance, were themselves in need, and American aid had been largely diverted to them. His Beatitude feared that little was to be hoped from Egypt, where the community is small and the Benevolent Society is a recent institution. He thought that the only hope was in international aid, and suggested that something should be done by me to enlist English assistance.

I did not see my way to being the channel of communication between the Bishop or the Patriarch and the Armenian Benevolent Society at Cairo, with which his Beatitude can communicate direct, but I have, on humanitarian grounds, called the attention of the heads of the British and Foreign Bible Society and the American Bible House to the state of things, and suggested their making a report to their headquarters for insertion in the British and American press.

I urged them not to dwell on the political side of the question, but to put forward an appeal for food and fuel before the coming winter.

Since writing the above I have seen the Grand Vizier, who told me that he had caused the Memorandum which I had presented to him on the state of affairs in the Vilayet of Bitlis (see my despatch No. 611 of the 24th ultimo and previous despatches) to be translated into Turkish, and that he had succeeded in reading the greater portion to the Sultan. As a result His Majesty had authorized him to take such remedial measures as he thought proper, and he had accordingly telegraphed to the Acting Vali directing him to acquaint himself with and act on the instructions sent to his predecessor and to distribute £ T. 3,000 to the inhabitants of the Moush district for the purchase of seed, and promising that more money should be sent later. He had also told the Acting Vali not to press unduly for the payment of arrears of taxation, and to relax the attempts being made to collect taxes from the impoverished inhabitants.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[33254] No. 118.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 7.)

(No. 639. Confidential.)

Sir, *Therapia, September* 30, 1907.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 387 of the 19th instant, transmitting a communication from Messrs. Lynch Brothers, on the subject of mother of pearl and oyster shell trade in the Persian Gulf, I have the honour to transmit herewith a Memorandum by Mr. George Lloyd, Honorary Attaché to this Embassy, prepared at my request, dealing with the points raised in connection with the activity of a German firm in this trade, and containing observations which I hope will not escape notice.

As an immediate measure, and one that can be taken before next fishing season, I venture to suggest that the attention of the British India Steam Navigation Company, who apparently already do some work in the shell fishing at Bahrein, should be drawn to the question, and that they should be urged to make arrangements for the extension of this branch of their trade in the forthcoming season.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 118.

Memorandum by Mr. G. Lloyd on the Mother of Pearl and Oyster Shell Trade of the Persian Gulf and its acquisition by Germans.

A TANGIBLE proof of the energy and insistency with which Germany is attempting to rival our commercial and political interests in the Persian Gulf comes

recently to hand in the information contained in a letter on the pearl-shell industry of the Persian Gulf, written by Messrs. Lynch Brothers' agent at Bussorah, and forwarded to His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on the 19th September.

The subject deserves considerable attention and stress laid upon it, inasmuch as the most recent *exposé* of the above-mentioned policy is disclosed through a subject in which few people at first sight would be likely to take more than a cursory interest.

Any student of Persian Gulf history cannot fail to have observed and noted that the rulers of that sea, and those who have obtained ascendency of influence on its coasts have always and only been those nations who have established strong and unrivalled commercial interests there. From the days of Sinbad's roving enterprise down to to-day the shores of the Persian Gulf have witnessed a perpetual succession of commercial struggles, and Portuguese and Dutch, Dutch and English, all alike, fought for the preservation of their commercial interests, and in no case was there a clear idea of any political aim until many years after the English supremacy had been established, and Indian interests were found to be insolubly bound up with the position we had won for the sake of commercial enterprise. The present position then of England in the Persian Gulf—the outcome, it is repeated, of commercial struggles with the Dutch—proves the point generally acknowledged, but often forgotten, that political ascendency in the Persian Gulf is the direct outcome of, and only to be insured by, a strong commercial predominance over all other nations.

This fact, so clearly established, gives the present commercial activity of Germany in the Persian Gulf an especial importance, and the news that Germany is in a fair way to get a complete monopoly of the most important natural trade of the Persian Gulf into her hands demands, I submit, immediate and studied attention and action on the part of His Majesty's Government.

It may be argued that His Majesty's Government is not in a position to go far, or to take a new course in assisting directly the British trader against a German competitor. But the situation in the Persian Gulf is a new one and a special one, and demands special and new methods.

Where the competing trade is a "fair" one, that is to say, where it is the outcome of unassisted private enterprise, it should be unnecessary, and is certainly unwise, to destroy the independence of the British trader by any form of Government help, but where the British trader is faced with subsidized rivals (an impossibility to prove, but an undoubted fact), it becomes time to consider whether tactics designed to impair British political supremacy in the Gulf should not be met with similar tactics.

The absorption of the mother-of-pearl industry of the Persian Gulf by Germany has the following danger, and one not common to other trades in the Gulf. The Germans, in pursuit of this industry, have established relations with many Sheikhs and villages on the coast; they own boats, and are employers of local labour, which facilitates their getting into touch with Sheikhs and Trucial Chiefs, who, possessed of our protection, and pledged to abstention from political relations with all other Powers, would not be allowed to have such intercourse in any other way.

To pursue this policy a very little further into an uninterrupted future, I think it is not an unfair assumption to make that the same nation who got possession of Kiao Chau may very consistently find a cause, should any accident occur or any attack be made by Arabs or pirates upon any of the fishing craft owned by Germans, for the despatch of German gun-boats, and for consequent political interference in a region where they have as yet no political interest in any shape or form.

I suggest that this is no improbable or far-fetched view of the future, but only a fair summing-up of probabilities based upon Germany's past methods in establishing her political influence, and as this is probably the best manner in which that object could be attained, it is probably the course which she will adopt.

The question is, then, what can be done, as a temporary measure at first and as a permanent one afterwards, to secure the transference of this trade from German into British hands, and to lessen the danger occasioned by the acute commercial rivalry with which England is being faced in the Persian Gulf.

The methods adopted must, I submit, be obstructive at first and constructive afterwards, the former to be used until the latter are in operation.

Obstructive methods in this connection are simple, and especially so in the Gulf. The head-quarters, or at any rate one of the most important places, for pearl-shell fisheries being at Sharga and along the neighbouring coast, where British relations with the Trucial Chiefs are both intimate and friendly, it would only be necessary for instructions and explanations to be sent to His Majesty's Resident in the Persian Gulf

that "no facilities" should be given by the Sheikhs to German traders or agents who were not, provided, say, with introductions from His Majesty's Resident. Nothing need be done on paper, and if His Majesty's Resident were allowed his customary discretion in local dealings with the Chiefs, there is no question that the many difficulties inseparable from trading with Arabs on such a desolate coast could be intangibly but certainly be made very formidable. The trade would gradually transfer itself to the British firm ready to take it up.

But these obstructions must result in a constructive scheme to insure the proper working of the pearl-shell business at a minimum of cost and the maximum of profit by Messrs. Gray Dawes, Messrs. Lynch, or any other firm of good standing acquainted with the trade of the Gulf who may be ready to take up the business actively.

According to the information given in the letter above mentioned from Messrs. Lynch Brothers' agent at Bussorah, the chief reasons which enable Germans to compete so successfully in this trade are—

1. That Hamburg has become a better market for the shells than London;
2. That the porterage and storage duties, &c., at that port are some 10 per cent. cheaper than at the port of London;
3. That the Hamburg American steamers quote cheaper rates of freight than British steamers.

As regards the first two points, I suggest that if it be true that greater facilities exist at Hamburg, and that the demand is also larger there than in London, no attempt should be made to divert the trade at once from Hamburg to London. It is only economical and wise that trade should be allowed to follow its natural course, provided always that in so doing it does not endanger other greater interests, and the main danger will have been averted as soon as this trade is being done by British and not German merchants in the Persian Gulf itself, and as soon as it is conveyed in British and not German ships.

It is then essential absolutely that an attempt should be made and pressure brought to bear on the British direct lines, with a view to obtaining special low rates of freight for this trade to Hamburg and London.

The rates quoted by both German and British Steamer Companies from the Persian Gulf are reasonable, and only vary from each other, as a rule, by about 2s. 6d., but there is every probability that the German lines give very large rebates on the rates quoted for this trade, and it should, I venture to suggest, be pointed out clearly to the British Steam-ship Companies that, if the trade is to be transferred to British hands, it is imperative that, for a short time at any rate, they should be prepared, even at a sacrifice, to underquote any rates given by the German steamers. It may be replied by them that they have sufficient trade without this shell trade, but they should be made to realize that in losing this trade they are risking losing other trades also. Messrs. Lynch's agent forcibly demonstrates this fact when he alludes to the way in which Germans at Lingah are getting a grasp of the Manchester trade, and are bringing out cotton goods in which they cannot as yet compete themselves from Manchester in German steamers.

The manner in which the Germans are extending their grasp of trade in the Persian Gulf, when necessary through the temporary medium of British goods, afterwards to be counterfeited when the trade is in their hands, constitutes a grave menace to British shipping in the Gulf, and it is a matter which I am convinced is not clearly realized in a practical manner by the British Steam-ship Companies, who rely for information entirely on their agents, who may not have sufficient grasp of the general situation, or of the trend of German policy, to fully apprehend the danger that exists.

British steamers at present continually call at Rotterdam, and in making Hamburg an additional port of call they would neither seriously lengthen their journey nor increase their expenditure.

In conclusion, I suggest that the scheme here proposed might, and very probably would, lead up to the establishment of a monopoly to one or several British firms, granted, say, for some consideration, by the Chiefs in the pearl-shell trade, and similar to the successful monopoly established by the Italians at Massowah.

I understand that the Hamburg-America Company are now beginning to run a service of two instead of one steamers per month to Bussorah, which may be taken as a proof not only of their determination to create interests in the Persian Gulf, but of the success with which they are doing it.

I venture then to reiterate that it is of urgent importance to British commercial

and political influence in the Persian Gulf that this matter, apparently somewhat insignificant at first sight, but one affecting and touching at the root and basis of British influence there, should be taken up immediately and studied in a manner that may so easily insure the success of the object in view, and the further safeguarding of the vital interests of Great Britain in the Persian Gulf.

[33751] No. 119.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 11.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 7th instant, relative the evacuation of Dthala.

India Office, October 10, 1907.

Inclosure in No. 119.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P. *October 7, 1907.*

ADEN: Your telegram dated the 10th ultimo.

Arrival at Aden of Political Agent, Dthala, and escort, who have evacuated hinterland, was reported by Resident at Aden on 4th instant. Summons to Aden has been issued to Chiefs in order that Agreements may be signed by them by the 15th of this month.

[33254] No. 120.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 430.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, October 18, 1907.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 639, Confidential, of the 30th ultimo, transmitting a Memorandum by Mr. Lloyd, respecting the increase of German commercial influence in the Persian Gulf.

A copy of this despatch will be communicated to the British India Steam Navigation Company for their confidential information.

I have to instruct your Excellency to convey to Mr. Lloyd my high appreciation of this valuable and useful Memorandum.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

[35025] No. 121.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received October 23.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 19th September, relative to the Abu Musa Red Oxide Concession.

India Office, October 23, 1907.

Inclosure 1 in No. 121.

Government of India to Major Cox.

(Telegraphic.) *Simla, September 3, 1907.*

WE repeated to Secretary of State on the 28th August your telegram of the 22nd August about Abu Musa, with following addition:—

"As concessionnaire is British subject . . . . force is used."

Following reply, dated the 30th August, received:—

"Abu Musa . . . . to remove voluntarily."

We think that in event of forcible removal of concessionnaire and miners being necessary best course might be to arrange that Lieutenant Gabriel, who is now at Kurrachee, should proceed in gun-boat to Abu Musa to watch proceedings of Sheikh's retainers. He might also arrange for delivery of written notice from Sheikh to concessionnaire if no such notice has already been sent. We are sending papers to Lieutenant Gabriel to enable him to be ready should you concur. Please telegraph your opinion on this suggestion.

Inclosure 2 in No. 121.

Major Cox to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) *Shiraz, September 7, 1907.*

UNLESS I hear to the contrary, I will send to Muscat by the mail of the 9th September a Residency munshi whom Gabriel knows. If it is decided to depute latter, please instruct him to pick munshi up, as it is undesirable that he should be dependent on unqualified man for interpreter, possibly illiterate. It will be convenient also that Foreign Department should provide him with notice. My telegram of the 5th April, 1907, in such terms considered necessary.

Inclosure 3 in No. 121.

Major Cox to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) *Shiraz, September 7, 1907.*

ABU MUSA Island: Your telegram No. 410.

So far as I know, Sheikh's notice of cancellation, dated the 21st February, is the only formal document which has been delivered to the concessionnaire. I have never sent any communication to the latter on the subject except an *ad interim* acknowledgment of the receipt of his original appeal for assistance. If, as I understand, there is no longer any objection to our appearing in the matter, I think that the Sheikh's notice of intended eviction should be delivered by Residency Agent, Lingah, or by Gabriel, accompanied by a written or verbal communication from Residency to the effect that if he fails to comply with notice Sheikh will have our approval to eject him and we will support him in enforcing it. I am inclined to believe that concessionnaire would accept situation in all probability. If he says that he will comply, he might be informed that gun-boat will be sent after short interval in order to make sure that his miners have been removed.

Whether Sheikh's notice of eviction should be delivered by Residency Agent, Lingah, or by Gabriel in "Sphinx," and whether our accompanying warning should be written or verbal, seems to depend largely on our intended attitude in the matter *vis-à-vis* Germans, and this point can best be decided by the Government of India. I have little doubt that anything written to concessionnaire will be shown to the Germans by him.

Inclosure 4 in No. 121.

Government of India to Major Grey.

(Telegraphic.) *Simla, September 14, 1907.*

PLEASE instruct Residency munshi sent by Cox to Muscat to join Gabriel at Bunder Abbas as soon as possible if he has not already done so.

Inclosure 5 in No. 121.

Government of India to Major Cox.

(Telegraphic.) *Simla, September* 14, 1907.

ABU MUSA Concession: Please see your telegram dated the 7th September.

A written notice, signed by the Sheikh, should be sent to the concessionnaire requiring removal of himself and workmen from island within stated time. Notice should be delivered as soon as possible by the Sheikh's man in the presence of the Residency Agent, Lingah, who should simultaneously deliver the verbal communication suggested in your telegram of the 7th September. Written notice might be in following terms, but should be written by Sheikh and not by our munshi:—

"Whereas I, Sheikh Sagar-bin-Khalid of Shargah, did by an Agreement dated the 18th Zil Kedah, 1315 (10th April, 1898), agree to lease all the red oxide mines situated on the Bu Musa Island to Haji Hassan-bin-Ali Samaiyeh, Abdulla-bin-Hasan, and Esa-bin-Abdul Latif;

"And whereas the aforesaid Agreement contained no provision permitting the grant of a monopoly of the red oxide to other parties without my consent;

"And whereas the said Haji Hassan-bin-Ali Samaiyeh did, on the 1st June, 1906, without my consent make a contract with Mr. Robert Wonkhaus, of Lingah, granting to him the entire monopoly of Bu Musa oxide;

"And whereas the said Haji Hassan-bin-Ali Samaiyeh was informed by me, in my letter dated 9th Mohurrum, 1325 (21st February, 1907), that the Agreement dated the 18th Zil Kedah, 1315, was cancelled, and that he had no longer any right of enjoyment in regard to the mines of Bu Musa;

"And whereas, notwithstanding the notice so given, the said Haji Hassan-bin-Ali Samaiyeh has continued up to this day to work the mines of Bu Musa, and to enjoy the produce thereof;

"Now, therefore, the said Haji Hassan-bin-Ali Samaiyeh is hereby informed that he is required to cease forthwith from his work on the mines and to remove himself and his workmen, machinery, and all instruments for mining from the Island of Bu Musa within ten days from the date of the delivery to him of this notice."

Residency Agent should immediately report to you and to Lieutenant Gabriel date of delivery to concessionnaire of Shiekh's notice, and Lieutenant Gabriel should arrange to visit Abu Musa in gun-boat on the 10th day from delivery of notice, accompanied by whatever force of Sheikh's men may be thought necessary, and should see whether concessionnaire and his miners have removed, and if not watch their forcible removal. In either event, Sheikh should be advised to leave for present small armed garrison on island sufficient to prevent British concessionnaire and miners regaining possession. Lieutenant Gabriel should telegraph to Government of India direct reports on progress of proceedings. Munshi sent by you to Muscat ordered to join Lieutenant Gabriel at Bunder Abbas.

(Repeated to Lieutenant Gabriel.)

[35269] No. 122.

Bishop Utudjian to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 25.)

Excellence, 26, *Lapwing Lane, West Didsbury, le* 24 *Octobre*, 1907.

J'AI l'honneur de vous transmettre ci-incluse, ainsi que le désir m'en a été exprimé, la lettre que sa Sainteté le Catholicos vous adresse.

Je mets également sous ce pli celle que sa Saintoté a écrite à Sa Majesté et que Lord Knollys me recommande de la faire parvenir à elle par votre entremise.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) K. UTUDJIAN, *Evêque*.

Inclosure 1 in No. 122.

The Patriarch of Armenia to Sir Edward Grey.

Excellence, *St. Etchmiadzine, le* 16 *Septembre*, 1907.

J'AI eu l'honneur de m'adresser aujourd'hui par une lettre à Sa Majesté Edward VII, pour implorer son intervention personnelle, afin de faire cesser les abominables persécutions dont sont victimes les populations Arméniennes de Turquie.

Au moment où, par le concert des Cabinets d'Europe, et plus particulièrement par l'action énergique du Gouvernement Britannique, la question Macédonienne entre dans une voie de solution, à cette heure mémorable où, grâce aux efforts louables de votre Excellence, les deux grands Empires de la terre ont déjà établi entre eux une entente concernant les affaires d'Asie, l'espoir renaît en moi que, cette fois-ci, le sort des Arméniens ne sera pas oublié.

Votre Excellence est si admirablement renseignée sur le danger d'extermination qui menace le peuple Arménien en Turquie que, j'en suis sûr, elle ne tarderait pas à mettre en garde son Gouvernement contre l'effroyable responsabilité que courrait l'Angleterre devant Dieu et l'histoire si elle ne se hâtait de venir au secours des Chrétiens d'Arménie.

En espérant que votre Excellence ne refusera pas l'appui de sa compétence et de son autorité à la solution de cette question éminemment humanitaire, j'implore la bénédiction des cieux sur votre tête, sur votre famille, et sur la grande nation Anglaise.

Le Patriarche Catholicos de tous les Arméniens,

(Signé) MEGUERTTICH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 122.

Letter addressed to the King by the Patriarch of Armenia.

Sire, *St. Etchmiadzine, le* 16 *Septembre*, 1907.

APRÈS un pénible silence de trois longues années, j'ai l'honneur de venir encore une fois, la dernière peut-être, vu ma vieillesse avancée, attirer la bienveillante attention de votre Majesté sur le régime infernal sous lequel périssent les populations Arméniennes de l'Empire Ottoman.

Je n'ai guère le désir ni le temps de m'attarder à la description détaillée de tous les maux horribles dont sont victimes depuis les derniers massacres de Sassoun mes ouailles de Turquie. Il faudrait un travail énorme pour classifier et énumérer tous les cas d'injustice criante commis en Turquie à l'égard des Arméniens, et d'ailleurs le Gouvernement de votre Majesté est amplement informé par l'intermédiaire de son digne Ambassadeur de Constantinople.

Ne croyez pas, Sire, que j'ignore la grande sollicitude que le Gouvernement Anglais a toujours portée au déplorable sort des sujets Arméniens du Sultan. Le Traité de Berlin, la Convention de Chypre, le projet de réformes élaboré en 1895, en resteront les mémorables témoignages. Mais—et ceci a été nombre de fois constaté d'une manière indiscutable—si les bonnes intentions et les conseils désintéressés n'ont jamais fait défaut de la part de l'Europe, en revanche on attend encore un système d'action, un contrôle, propres à rappeler au Gouvernement Turc ses devoirs élémentaires envers ses sujets.

Le cas de Macédoine en est la plus récente preuve. Lasses d'une attente de plus d'un quart de siècle, à dater du Congrès de Berlin, les Grandes Puissances se sont mises elles-mêmes à l'œuvre de pacification de ce pays malheureux en le plaçant sous leur contrôle.

Une ère de prospérité et de progrès va enfin s'ouvrir pour les populations éprouvées de la Macédoine. C'était avec une profonde joie que je suivais de ma solitude au pied de l'Ararat cette noble œuvre de régénération entreprise par les Représentants de l'Europe, attendant avec patience que le tour en vint enfin à ces autres martyrs, plus infortunés encore peut-être, aux Arméniens de l'Asie-Mineure.

Hélas, mon attente fut vaine!

Tout en conservant ma foi en l'esprit de justice des Gouvernements de l'Europe, je crains qu'il ne soit trop tard le jour où l'Europe Chrétienne et civilisée se rappellera enfin ses responsabilités et les devoirs dont elle s'est chargée envers les Arméniens.

Sire, la nation Arménienne se débat à l'heure qu'il est dans une crise fatale. Ce ne sont plus les massacres, c'est tout un système compliqué d'extermination qui ravage et dépeuple l'Arménie.

La famine, devenu déjà chronique, sévit à ce moment dans les Vilayets de Van, de Bitlis, d'Erzeroum. Les paysans se nourissent des herbes des champs; beaucoup ont péri, d'autres se sont suicidés pour échapper à une agonie affreuse. Les maladies épidémiques trouvent un milieu propice parmi ces populations faméliques. Pendant ce temps le Gouvernement Turc pousse la perception des impôts avec une sévérité inouïe. On exige même les arriérés de dix à quinze années, arrachant aux paysans non seulement leurs bœufs et chariots, mais même leurs vêtements, leur literie, tout ce qui tombe sous la main des percepteurs. Et le paysan Arménien se trouve sans abri, sans pain, sans moyens de travail dans un pays qui était un des plus riches par ses produits agricoles.

En même temps il est rigoureusement interdit aux Arméniens d'aller chercher du travail ailleurs, tandis que des milliers d'émigrés qui désirent rentrer dans leurs foyers, auprès des leurs, n'y sont nullement autorisés.

La population, poussée au désespoir, hypothèque ses biens à des prix dérisoires, forcée alors de travailler sur les terres d'autrui. Des milliers de sans-terre vont augmenter le nombre des "marabas," serfs, qui travaillent pour les Beys Kurdes et Turcs. A l'aube du vingtième siècle renaît en Arménie le servage du Moyen-Age.

Le Gouvernement Turc, loin de chercher les moyens propres à remédier à cet état lamentable, aggrave au contraire la situation de ses sujets Chrétiens, en établissant des émigrés Mahométans dans les villages Arméniens.

C'est ainsi qu'on prépare la chute morale et l'extermination du peuple Arménien, de ce peuple, qui, par son intelligence et son travail, a joué un rôle si prépondérant dans l'œuvre de civilisation de l'Empire Ottoman.

A l'exemple d'un troupeau affaibli à la merci des bêtes féroces, la population Chrétienne des provinces Arméniennes se débat dans cette situation inextricable sans avoir l'espoir d'en sortir jamais. C'est ici qu'il faut rechercher la cause de la rébellion dans laquelle s'engage une partie de la population, ayant perdu toute foi dans l'efficacité des moyens légaux; tandis que beaucoup d'autres, au péril de leur vie, émigrent en Russie, bien que des milliers d'émigrants qui les y ont devancés lors des massacres de 1895-6, privés de terre, ont grand'peine à végéter en se louant comme journaliers et sont forcés bien souvent de recourir à la mendicité pour ne pas mourir de faim. D'autres enfin, désespérés de trouver une aide quelconque, cherchent leur salut dans l'apostasie—perte non seulement pour l'Église Chrétienne, mais aussi pour la société moralement saine.

On peut avancer, sans être soupçonné d'exagération, que pendant les dix dernières années depuis les massacres de 1895, le nombre des Arméniens tués, emprisonnés, déportés, Islamisés de force, ne le cède en rien, s'il ne le dépasse, à celui des victimes qui périrent lors des vêpres sanglantes de 1895-6.

La population Arménienne est vouée à une extermination certaine par un système qui a l'avantage de ne pas attirer l'attention du monde civilisé.

Sire, c'est au nom de la Chrétienté, au nom de la civilisation, au nom de l'humanité, au nom des plus sacrées traditions de l'Angleterre, que je vous implore de prendre en mains le sort des infortunés sujets Arméniens du Sultan!

Seule une intervention énergique et immédiate, suivie d'un contrôle Européen, sera à même de mettre fin au système actuel, assurant à mes ouailles de Turquie la vie, les biens, et l'honneur.

Rappelez-vous, Sire, que seuls l'amour Chrétienne et la justice sont éternels et inébranlables sur cette terre; ayez pitié de l'agonie du peuple martyr et écoutez la voix suppliante du vieillard, qui, un pied dans le tombeau, prie pour vous, pour votre famille, et pour la gloire et la prospérité de l'Empire Britannique.

Le Patriarche Suprême et Catholicos
de tous les Arméniens,
(Signé) MEGUERTITCH.

[35354] No. 123.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 26.)

(No. 660.)

Sir, *Constantinople, October 21, 1907.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 597 of the 18th ultimo, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad respecting the opening of a carriage service between Bagdad and Aleppo.

I have, &c.
(For the Ambassador),
(Signed) J. A. C. TILLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 123.

Major Ramsay to Sir N. O'Conor.

Sir, *Bagdad, September 12, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that a carriage service between Bagdad and Aleppo was started on the 1st September, 1907. I am informed that the carriage which left Aleppo on the 1st September completed the journey in about eight and a half days, while the carriage in the opposite direction took one day longer.

I attach a statement showing the names of the stages, the time that each is expected to take, and division of the journey by days.

The following further information about the Company, called "Shurkat Arabat Bagdad wa Haleb," may be of interest:—

"The Company at present has 200 mules, and hopes to increase the number. At present it is only able to run two carriages each way every other day; it hopes to run three every other day before long.

"On each day there is one carriage of the first-class and one of the second-class. The price of a seat in the former is £T. 4, and in the latter £T. 2½. The first-class carriage takes four passengers, and the second-class carriage takes six passengers. In the first-class carriage an extra person can be carried on the box at the cost of £T. 3. The first-class carriage is provided with springs and a hood, and is of the flat-bottomed type which is, I believe, common in Syria; the second-class carriage has a hood, but is less well provided with springs. In addition to these the Company has four landaus; for the use of these a charge of £T. 20 is made for the journey.

"The road is worst between Hit and Ana, but a French engineer has for some time been employed on improving it. Ordinarily the Euphrates is crossed by the bridge of boats at Falluja, but when the river is in flood the bridge is withdrawn, and the carriage then has to be taken across in a boat.

"At present the carriages only run during the day time. At the halting places there are the usual khans, for the use of which no charge is made; but the Company hope to improve the accommodation, and to make arrangements for the supply of cooked food.

"The Company also hopes to obtain the mail contract after next spring.

"Three mules are harnessed to each carriage, except in the case of the landaus, which are heavier than the others; with these four mules are driven at the same time."

2. The information contained in this letter would probably be of use to tourist agencies in England, but I am not addressing the Board of Trade direct.

3. A lighter and less expensive conveyance would, I think, be useful, and I am trying to obtain for the Company a model "Ekka" from India. This is a very light two-wheeled carriage for one pony or mule, and it is suitable for use on any road over which a wheeled vehicle can be driven.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. RAMSAY, *Major.*
Officiating Political Resident in Turkish Arabia and Acting British Consul-General, Bagdad.

Inclosure 2 in No. 123.

Carriage Service between Bagdad and Aleppo.

STATEMENT showing the names of the stages, the time that each is expected to take, and division of the journey by days.

			Hrs.	Mins.
1st day	..	1. Abu Minasir	6	0
		2. Faluja	3	20
		3. Ramadi	5	0
2nd ,,	..	4. Shari'a	3	0
		5. Hit	3	10
		6. Jebba	6	20
3rd ,,	..	7. Haditha	5	40
		8. Fehaimi	6	10
		9. A'ana	3	40
4th ,,	..	10. Nehaya	5	0
		11. Kayem	4	0
		12. Abu Kamal	2	40
5th ,,	..	13. Salhiya	3	40
		14. Miyadin	5	20
		15. Deir	4	10
6th ,,	..	16. Tebni	5	10
		17. Ma'dan	3	10
		18. Sabkha	3	10
7th ,,	..	19. Hammam	5	10
		20. Abu Hireir	3	20
		21. Meskena	3	20
8th ,,	..	22. Deir Hafer	4	0
		23. Aleppo	5	0

[35535] No. 124.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received October 28.)

(No. 664.)

Sir, *Therapia, October 22, 1907.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 631 of the 1st instant, I have the honour to report that the Grand Vizier informed me yesterday that the Minister of Public Works had been authorized to remit through the Agricultural Bank a sum of £T. 15,000 for the relief of distress in the Bitlis Vilayet. His Highness repeated his previous assurances that the rigorous exaction of taxes was being relaxed.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[36516] No. 125.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 4.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 2nd instant, relative to the Abu Musa Red Oxide Concession.

India Office, November 4, 1907.

Inclosure in No. 125.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P. *November 2, 1907.*

POLITICAL Assistant, Bunder Abbas, telegraphs on the 28th October as follows regarding situation on Abu Musa :—

"Report has reached me from Lingah that Herr Wonckhaus' local representative, Mr. Brown, sailed on the 22nd ultimo for the island, accompanied by Abdullah-bin-Hassan and some twenty-six men. Mr. Brown took with him a German flag to place upon the accumulations of oxide. On the 25th ultimo the party returned to Lingah, having been refused permission to land by the Sheikh's guard, who behaved with resolution. Mr. Brown now proposes to represent his case to the German Government, and is going to Bushire for that purpose."

[36832] No. 126.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 7.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 6th November, relative to the affairs of Nejd.

India Office, November 7, 1907.

Inclosure in No. 126.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P. *November 6, 1907.*

THE latest reports, dated about the 16th October, in regard to Nejd affairs, are to the effect that Bin Rashid has been defeated by Bin Saood, and that latter is besieging Bin Rashid in Boraida Fort.

[37148] No. 127.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 11.)

(No. 681.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November 6, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Vice Consul at Bitlis, reporting on the present situation in the vilayet.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 127.

Vice-Consul Heard to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 10.)

Sir, *Bitlis, September 30, 1907.*

IN confirmation of my telegram of the 28th instant, I have the honour to report that Feizi Bey, Mutessarif of Sairt, has been appointed Acting Vali in the place of the Defterdar, who still retains his former office. Of the former I know nothing as yet, as he is now to the district, beyond the fact that he is an Albanian and a "Mektebli." Of the latter I can only say that a more useless, incompetent, and probably corrupt official could hardly be found. I cannot state exactly for what reason he has been deposed, but believe that it was in consequence of the general irritation caused by the disorderly and insecure state of the vilayet under his charge, and his neglect of the public business. The day before his removal a telegram had been sent to the Grand Vizier by various Notables and officials, headed by the President of the Civil Court, complaining of the ravages of Hamidie and other Kurds, and the insecurity of the roads, which was preventing the arrival of corn from outside. The corn speculators, alarmed at the recent riot at Erzeroum, have transferred their grain from their stores to their houses, so that at one time there was no corn to be had in the market. A bread riot seemed for a time imminent, and the danger is not unlikely to recur.

Measures have now been taken to patrol the roads, and to have corn brought from Soulanik and Sairt. The Defterdar also informed me that an expedition was to be sent to punish the Modky tribes. Their last exploit was a raid on Papshen, about half an hour from the town. Owing to the pluck of a zaptieh who opened a rapid

fire from one of the houses, the raiders were driven off, having only looted one house and secured seven sheep.

The Hasananli appear to be as active as ever. I am informed that about the 14th September they entirely looted the Armenian village of Rustamgeduk, in Boulanik, the inhabitants of which fled to Gop. On the 21st September they robbed 250 sheep from Gezvag, in Akhlat. It is no use even mentioning such occurrences to the authorities, who are quite powerless to protect the sufferers or exact reparation.

The Defterdar in answer to my questions informed me that he was ignorant of what is being done in Mush to carry out reforms, that he had heard nothing of fourteen tahsildars having been arrested, or that arrears of taxes were to be remitted, or that reforms were contemplated in this sanjak. As he no longer is in office, however, it is unnecessary to discuss his general lack of information, but I would venture to suggest that it is highly desirable that the Grand Vizier should instruct his successor as soon as possible as to what improvements it is proposed to introduce.

Yesterday the merchants of the town telegraphed to Tahir Pasha, the gist of their message being, as I am informed, that the insecurity of the roads was killing trade, and that unless something were done to suppress the lawless Kurds they would have to make representations elsewhere.

The Defterdar informed me that two companies of soldiers had left Sairt to chastise the Bohtan tribes. I accept his statement with hesitation.

Mehmed Rasul, a notorious Kurdish brigand of the most bloodthirsty type, has just "escaped" from prison in Bitlis. He belongs to the Sharnakh tribe, and the President of the Civil Court, who is much incensed at the occurrence, states that he has burnt five Chaldean villages and is responsible for about twenty murders of innocent persons.

I am informed that about three weeks ago a telegram was received here from the Grand Vizier inquiring "in what way reforms were possible." The Defterdar forwarded it to Tahir Pasha, who answered that he could give no reply on the subject until he returned. This information was confirmed in part by the Defterdar himself.

(Confidential.)

I have just had an interesting conversation with Hilmi Bey, formerly Professor of History at the Imperial College at Constantinople. He states that he has received permission from the Grand Vizier to send a long telegram cost free declaring the true conditions of affairs here. This telegram he read to me, and the following is the gist of its contents:—

A Government should have some system in its administration and make itself obeyed. In this vilayet, however, the Kurds do not obey, and rebellion and robbery are considered justifiable. Thus a coldness grows towards the Government. "Seeing these things, I write to you as an Osmanli."

1. Every corner of the vilayet is full of Kurdish brigands. For the last fifteen or twenty years the privilege of bearing arms has been abused, and the arms given by Government are used by Kurds as instruments of robbery and oppression. They raid cattle and grain, and vie with each other in robbing merchandize coming from Diarbekir and Erzeroum. They rob not only in the kazas, but also in the towns, from which live stock has been carried off. Such things are burning the hearts of persons of conscience, and this feeling is growing every day. Owing to the lack of security the usual import of grain has ceased.

2. Already the greater part of the Armenians who are agriculturists, being unable to bear any longer the constant oppression of the tribes, and being unable to live in this country, wish to emigrate to Russia to find a living, or, casting off their Turkish nationality, to go to America. Owing to this oppression, the tithes revenue, which ten years ago amounted to £T.125,000, has decreased to £T. 35,000. (N.B.—These figures were obtained from the "Muhassebe.")

3. The state of insecurity and oppression which continues is driving both Christians and Moslems alike to quit the town at the rate of forty or fifty families a-week.

4. The enforcement of order being now in the hands of Sheikhs, who work only to overcome the Government, which proves an obstacle to carrying out the law, great despair is caused to Government officials.

5. The Government is not strong enough to enforce its power. The State revenues

are not duly gathered, so that, officials being unpaid, corruption and abuses are caused. The reasons for this are:—

(1.) The incapacity and ignorance of financial officials.

(2.) The lawlessness of the Kurds, who take this inefficiency of the officials to mean weakness, and use their arms to damage all Government revenues.

6. The higher officials, lacking armed force to suppress such lawlessness, shrink from their duty, and, failing to inform the Central Government of the means appropriate to such a purpose, they shut their eyes. Accordingly the Kurds who profit from such a state of affairs do not look upon themselves as Turkish subjects, and are whispering that they are going to restore the days of Bedr-Khan Bey. They are not grateful for this weakness of the Government, but think themselves invincible.

7. The dreadful results brought about by the rebellion against Ferid Pasha have destroyed the moral force of the Government, and it is impossible to understand why the Central Government has not been informed of this. As no one has taken any notice, the Kurds believe their conduct to be justified, and if Government now wishes to punish them, they have arms and can defend themselves, and so consider themselves independent.

8. Failure to punish minor misdeeds will encourage the Kurds to greater crimes.

9. As an instance of the general disorder, the case of the escape of Mehmed Rasul, already referred to, is quoted.

The following reforms are then suggested:—

1. Patrols of gendarmes and cavalry to be sent out in every direction to keep order and protect the roads. Robbers to be arrested and their houses burned. An inspector to be appointed to see that these patrols do not oppress the villagers.

2. All brigands and oppressors thus arrested to be severely punished, and an Extraordinary Court, *ad hoc*, to be instituted in Van and Bitlis.

3. The undue licence assumed by the Sheikhs to be prevented, and their interference in Government affairs to be forbidden.

4. The Valis in Van and Bitlis to be endowed with exceptional powers to act as required.

5. A supreme inspector for the control of all matters in these vilayets to be appointed with full powers.

Hilmi Bey, whose present residence in Bitlis is due to his ultra-Liberal opinions, is, I believe, a man of more than ordinary intelligence and unimpeachable honesty. His opinions, therefore, have all the more value, though, as expressed above, they have been somewhat modified for the occasion. Those he expressed to me personally were considerably stronger.

Before leaving he informed me in the strictest confidence that he had seen a secret telegram received by Tahir Pasha shortly before his departure for Van from the Palace, in which it was ordered that the oppression of the Armenians was to be continued by methods "outside the law" ("Kanoun Fefkinde"). I have no reason to doubt his statement, as apart from his natural honesty he could have no possible motive in inventing such a thing.

The value of the Imperial Government's assurances with regard to reforms may thus be gauged, in so far, that is, as they concern Armenians.

I have just received a copy of a telegram sent to Tahir Pasha by thirty-five of the chief Armenian and Moslem merchants and Notables of the town.

The following is an approximate translation:—

"The robbers ('eshkya') of our vilayet, who have not met any severe check or punishment from the Government, continue their raids and pillaging. They are troubling and ruining the people. These robbers, having remained without any punishment or investigation for a great many years, have become very bold, so that several times they have attacked Bitlis, the centre of the vilayet, and carried away the cattle.

"They have closed the roads. The city, which cannot be cultivated and which more than all should be supplied with stores of corn and other provisions, does not receive victuals for lack of security. Prices are continually rising. No one can go out of the city, and those who attempt it are robbed. The people are filled with fear and horror for the coming winter.

"This year nearly 1,000 families, who were not able to gain their daily bread and make a livelihood, have removed themselves to other cities and emigrated to foreign lands, and many are preparing to follow their countrymen. The one and only cause of these misfortunes is the carelessness of the officials in their duties, and their incapacity in looking after the wants and condition of the country. For this the city is deprived of security and peace. Murders and quarrels occur in the market.

"Because we need deeds rather than words, and because the safety and prosperity of the province has been committed to your hand and care by the Sultan, we make bold to beseech you to make an end of this ruinous state of affairs and to take steps towards a practical reformation and to put it into execution rapidly.

"We await your order.

"(Signed by thirty-five Moslems and Armenians of highest rank.')

"*Bitlis, September* 15 (28), 1323."

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. B. HEARD.

[35269] No. 128.

Sir Edward Grey to the Patriarch of Armenia and Catholicos of Etchmiadzin.

Your Holiness, *Foreign Office, November* 11, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th September,* and to inform you that I did not fail to submit to the King, my gracious Sovereign, the letter* which your Holiness addressed to His Majesty on the same date referring to the condition of the Christian population of Armenia, and soliciting his intervention on their behalf.

I have now received His Majesty's commands to assure your Holiness that His Majesty is earnestly desirous that all possible steps may be taken for the alleviation of the sufferings which your Holiness describes.

With this object His Majesty's Government are continually in communication with His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople and with the British Consuls in Armenia, and Sir N. O'Conor has recently been able to report that the Grand Vizier has promised to dispatch certain relief funds to those districts where the sufferings have been most acute.

A copy of your letter will be forwarded to His Majesty's Ambassador for such further action as his Excellency may consider it expedient to take in the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

[37405] No. 129.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(Received November 12.)

(Confidential.)

Sir, *Admiralty, November* 9, 1907.

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a copy of a letter dated the 28th September, with its inclosures, which has been received through the Commander-in-chief, East Indies, from the Senior Naval Officer in the Persian Gulf, respecting the visit of His Majesty's ship "Sphinx" to Al Khadra.

A copy has also been sent to the India Office.

I am, &c.
(Signed) C. I. THOMAS.

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* See inclosures in No. 122.

Inclosure 1 in No. 129.

Commander Litchfield to Commander-in-chief, East Indies.

Sir, "*Sphinx*," *at Muscat, September* 28, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to submit, for your information, a copy of my letter to Captain Scott, I.M.S., officiating for His Majesty's Consul at Muscat, with reference to my second visit to Al Khadra, undertaken at his request with a view to enforcing respect for the British flag.

2. I do not consider that any further action is necessary.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SHIRLEY LITCHFIELD, *Commander and Senior Naval Officer, Persian Gulf Division.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 129.

Captain Scott to Commander Litchfield.

(Confidential.)

Sir, *Muscat, September* 25, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to inform you, with reference to your visit to Khadra, reported to me on the 20th instant, and our subsequent interview with His Highness the Sultan on the same day, that I have been instructed by telegram from Major Grey, Political Agent, that His Highness the Sultan's offer to write a letter to the Wali of Suweikh, asking him to accompany you to Khadra and remonstrate and punish if necessary the offenders there, should be accepted.

If afterwards the steps, in your opinion, have been insufficient to vindicate British prestige, other measures will be ordered.

Meanwhile I should be much obliged if, according to our verbal plan, you will convey His Highness' letter to the Wali of Suweikh as soon as it is convenient to you.

I inclose His Highness the Sultan's letter to the Wali of Suweikh, and also an nglish equivalent translation of the same for your guidance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NORMAN SCOTT, *Captain, I.M.S., Officiating for His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Muscat.*

Inclosure 3 in No. 129.

Paraphrased Translation of Arabic Letter written by the Sultan of Muscat to Sheikh Said-bin-Salem-bin-Hussem, Wali of Suweikh.

(After compliments.) 15 *Shahban*, 1325 (*September* 24, 1907).

THERE comes to you our friend the Captain of the Government man-of-war.

He told us that he went to Khadra and landed on shore, but the people would not allow him to go to the town.

Now you will accompany him to Khadra, where he will land.

He wishes to make an inquiry into what he has heard of arms having been taken to Khadra for the Somalis.

He desires to have them seized. If you find them seize them, for I forbade them for the Somalis.

Ask the Sheikhs why they did not allow the Captain to move about freely.

If that was the work of immature youths, it is necessary they should be imprisoned.

Tell the Sheikhs that such a thing should not occur again.

It is necessary that when they (the man-of-war people) land they should be received with due respect and salaam.

(Signed) FEYSAL.

Inclosure 4 in No. 129.

Commander Litchfield to Captain Scott.

(Confidential.)

Sir, *"Sphinx," at Muscat, September* 28, 1907.

IN accordance with the request conveyed in your letter to me of the 25th instant, I have the honour to inform you that I sailed from Muscat at 5·30 A.M. the 26th September, and arrived at As Suwaik at 1 P.M. that day. I landed and was received by the Wali to whom I delivered the letter from His Highness the Sultan. I embarked the Wali and four of his men, and proceeded to Al Khadra, arriving there at 3·30 P.M.

Having made arrangements for the event of an actively hostile reception, I landed with the Wali. We found the village practically deserted, only about half a dozen men and several women and children being visible. I saw no Somalis. One of the men, an Arab, I recognized as having been one of the principal offenders on the last occasion.

His former companions had apparently considered it wise to keep out of the way.

This man, named Oubayed-bin-Hamed, immediately accosted the Wali, and used similar expressions to those I had previously been favoured with.

He seized the Wali by the sleeve and fiercely demanded why he had brought us there again, we had no business there, clear out, &c.

I was surprised that the Wali allowed the man to talk to him in this manner, and I formed the conclusion that his authority could not be very great.

I asked the Wali who the Headman was. He said that there was none, but the people were under the Sheikhs of the neighbouring villages, whom he had sent for. Those gentlemen arrived, after some delay, with several of their people.

The Sultan's letter was read to the assembly, and I demanded the production of the chief offenders and the Somali arms. The Sheikhs said they did not know the men I described, and knew nothing of the arms or any Somalis. They also said that nobody lived in this village, and the people who had insulted us must have been strangers.

I told them that I could not accept this explanation, in view of the large number of houses (mat huts), women, and children, which was out of all proportion to the small number of men now in the village.

As to the arms, they pressed me to search the village and two bedans at anchor. This offer I did not accept, as their anxiety that I should do so, in order to confirm their denial that arms were there, indicated that it would only result in waste of time, and the sun was getting low.

I found that the Wali, instead of taking an active part in the investigation, was inclined to side with the Sheikhs and people on the defensive, and wished to put the onus on me.

I told them that one man among them, Oubayed-bin-Hamed could say, if he chose, who the men were, and probably where the arms are. I explained that incivility and threats to British officers and denial of the Sultan's authority could not be lightly passed over and terminate with polite phrases and doubtful explanations.

Also that the exportation of arms to Somaliland with which the Al Khadra people were implicated was forbidden. Some one must be punished, with a view to preventing such occurrences in future. As neither the Wali or the Sheikhs could produce the chief offenders, I insisted on the arrest of the only man present I was able to identify. I offered to request the Sultan's pardon for this man if he would name the others, and give any reliable information as to the present location of the Somali arms.

After considerable pleading by the Wali and Sheikhs on behalf of Oubayed-bin-Hamed, the Wali finding that I would not yield arrested the man, and I returned to the ship with the Wali and his prisoner at sunset and conveyed them to Suwaik. The Wali will keep the man in confinement there pending the Sultan's pleasure.

Perhaps on reflection the man will avail himself of my offer referred to above.

I inclose a letter from the Wali of Suwaik to His Highness the Sultan.

2. I trust that my action will meet with approval. I considered it expedient both to advance British prestige and the Sultan's authority, as well as to strengthen the hand of the Wali, which appeared to be capable of a little development.

3. No further action to vindicate British prestige is in my opinion necessary. The villagers are evidently frightened, and I think the arrest of Oubayed impressed both the Wali and the Sheikhs, and will have a beneficial result on the manners of the people.

4. As regards the capture of the Somali arms, my future action must await further information, as I think it doubtful that the arms are now in the particular village of Khadara I visited.

I would venture to suggest that steps might be taken to stop the export of the arms from Muscat and Muttra by the arrest of the agents on shore at those places.

I have, &c.

(Signed) SHIRLEY LITCHFIELD, *Commander and Senior Naval Officer, Persian Gulf Division.*

37813] No. 130.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(*Received November* 16.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram to the Viceroy, dated the 14th instant, relative to the Abu Musa Red Oxide Concession.

India Office, November 16, 1907.

Inclosure in No. 130.

Mr. Morley to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *India Office, November* 14, 1907.

ABU MUSA Island. Please see your telegrams of the 29th ultimo and the 2nd instant.

In the opinion of the Foreign Office it is not improbable that the matter may be taken up by the German Government, but difficulty in replying satisfactorily to representations that may be made on the subject is not anticipated.

[37861] No. 131.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(*Received November* 18.)

(No. 694.)

Sir, *Pera, November* 12, 1907.

SINCE my despatch No. 684 of the 4th instant, in which I forwarded copy of Mr. Vice-Consul Heard's despatch No. 10 respecting the state of things in the Bitlis Vilayet, I have received a number of further despatches from Mr. Heard on the same subject, showing that the instructions sent by the Grand Vizier, as reported in my despatch No. 587 of the 18th September, have been productive up to the present moment of little improvement in the condition of the Armenians in that province. It is satisfactory, however, to see that Mr. Heard speaks in high terms of the Acting Vali, Feizi Pasha, who shows a good grasp of the situation and an intelligent comprehension of the abuses that prevail, and of the remedies necessary for their correction. In an interview with Mr. Heard his Excellency admitted that little had been done as yet to improve the condition of the Armenians, it being impossible to carry out the necessary reforms until he was provided with some competent officials to execute his orders. The Grand Vizier had instructed him to name those officials whom he thought it desirable should be removed, but he thought it well to await Tahir Pasha's return before making his recommendations. This will involve long delay, as Tahir Pasha is likely to be occupied on the Turco-Persian Frontier Commission for some time, but we might in the meanwhile, I think, endeavour to get rid of the two officials who seem, according to Mr. Heard, to be largely responsible for the miserable plight of the Armenians—I refer to the Defterdar and Safvet Pasha, the Mutessarif of Mousb, the latter of whom has not, so far as Mr. Heard can learn, executed any of the orders sent him by the Vali or the Grand Vizier.

I shall lose no opportunity of urging upon the Grand Vizier the removal of these two officials.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[38210] No. 132.

Bishop Utudjian to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 19.)

26, *Lapwing Lane, West Didsbury, Manchester,*
Sir, *November* 18, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th instant.

I deeply regret to say his Holiness the Patriarch-Catholicos of Armenia died on the 11th instant. As soon as his successor is appointed I will obey your command and forward the letter; meanwhile I will retain it for safe custody.

I have, &c.
(Signed) K. UTUDJIAN.

[38248] No. 133.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 20.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 31st October, relative to the Abu Musa Red Oxide Concession.

India Office, November 19, 1907.

Inclosure 1 in No. 133.

Vice-Consul Gabriel to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Henjam, October* 23, 1907.

PLEASE see my telegram of the 12th October regarding Abu Musa. I arrived at Sharga on the evening of the 16th October and found that the joint concessionnaire, Abdulla-bin-Hassan, had arrived and handed over letter from Wonckhaus, Lingah, to the Sheikh claiming ownership of all oxide accumulated on the beach, and advising him to withdraw notice and to abstain from interference in mine(s), and further threatening to send men to protect their property on the island. Abdulla-bin-Hassan also threatened Sheikh with retaliation by the Germans. Owing to this Sheikh became afraid, and was much inclined to hold back at last, but eventually dispatched four dhows with sixty armed men and two dhows for the conveyance (to) Lingah of workmen, &c.

On arrival at island at noon on the 20th October I landed in advance (of) troops and told representative of concessionnaire that, provided he obeyed Sheikh's orders, he had nothing to fear from the troops. After receiving warning from me against use of unnecessary violence force landed. Abdulla-bin-Hassan, joint concessionnaire, had previously brought news of notice to island, but no steps had been taken to comply with it. Representative and workmen agreed reluctantly to leave, and began at once to pack and carry property to the beach, but embarkation was delayed owing to heavy storm until afternoon of the 22nd October. On the night of the 22nd October whole of the concessionnaire colony, numbering 100 souls, was dispatched to Lingah in two dhows and huts levelled to the ground. There remain five carts, four loading barges, some hundreds of oxide loading baskets, and other materials, concerning all of which I have communicated to Sheikh that two dhows will be required.

I have instructed Residency Agent to advise Sheikh for the present to maintain a guard of thirty men, and that it is desirable to fly flag in the oxide colony, existing flagstaff being at the further side of the island and flag invisible except in the immediate vicinity.

I left island on the morning of the 23rd after giving final advice to Sheikh's representative regarding disposition of guard to all visitors.

Regarding Wonckhaus' claim to all oxide now on the beach, which I estimate at 500 tons, terms of his contract would seem to show that he does not own oxide until it is delivered on board steamer.

I recommend that, pending the removal of the remaining property, a gun-boat

should visit island again as soon as possible. I will send by next mail a detailed Report with a copy of letter which Wonckhaus addressed to the Sheikh.

(Repeated to Major Cox.)

Inclosure 2 in No. 133.

Government of India to Major Cox.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Simla, October* 29, 1907.

PLEASE refer to Gabriel's telegram of 23rd October, Abu Musa. Island should be revisited by gun-boat as proposed. You might, if you see no objection, act in spirit of my telegram of 8th April, 1907, and induce Sheikh to permit concessionnaire and Wonckhaus to remove oxide collected on beach as well as their other effects if you are approached by them in the matter.

Inclosure 3 in No. 133.

Vice-Consul Gabriel to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Henjam, October* 28, 1907.

I HAVE received a Report from Lingah that Mr. Brown, local representative of Wonckhaus, accompanied by Abdulla-bin-Hassan and about twenty-six men, sailed for Abu Musa Island on the 22nd October. Mr. Brown took a German flag to place on accumulated oxide. Sheikh's guard were resolute, and refused to allow them to land on island, and they returned to Lingah on 25th October. Mr. Brown now intends proceeding to Bushire to represent his case to the German Government.

(Repeated to Major Cox.)

[38249] No. 134.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 20.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 17th instant, relative to the Abu Musa Red Oxide Concession.

India Office, November 19, 1907.

Inclosure in No. 134.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P. *November* 17, 1907.

PLEASE see my telegram of the 2nd instant as to affairs at Abu Musa.

A copy of the letter from Herr Wonckhaus to the Sheikh of Sharga, dated the 31st October, which was delivered to the Sheikh before concessionnaire's men had been removed from the island, has now reached us. A formal claim by Herr Wonckhaus that Concession and mines are security for advances made by him to the concessionnaire is asserted in the letter. Herr Wonckhaus would apparently have acquired territorial rights in Abu Musa under this claim if conceded, and there would thus have been a contravention of clause 3 of the Protectorate Treaty which the Chief of Sharga signed on the 7th March, 1892 (see inclosure to our letter of the 7th June, 1892). Papers were dispatched to you by mail of the 7th instant. Resident at Bushire has been informed by His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran that the German Minister has mentioned that Herr Wonckhaus' employés on Abu Musa have been attacked by the Sheikh of Sharga under protection of His Majesty's ship "Lapwing." We have instructed Resident to report fresh facts to the Legation if this has not already been done.

[38684] No. 135.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 25.)

(No. 14. Commercial.)

Sir, *Tehran, October 22, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, with reference to your despatch No. 9, Commercial, of the 21st ultimo, copy of a Memorandum prepared by Mr. Loraine on the subject of German shipping competition in the Persian Gulf.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES M. MARLING.

Inclosure in No. 135.

Memorandum by Mr. Loraine respecting the Hamburg-America Steam-ship Line to the Persian Gulf.

(Foreign Office despatch No. 9, Commercial, of September 21, 1907.)

THE competition of the German Line in the Persian Gulf has so far, I believe, been distinctly healthy, if regarded from the point of view of the general interests of trade as opposed to the particular interests of individual Shipping Companies.

The three British Steam-ship Companies operating in the Persian Gulf had formed a sort of combine, which enabled them to maintain their rates of freight at whatever figure they pleased, the monopoly they until recently enjoyed giving them complete control.

The result was that they attained considerable unpopularity, and, on the advent of the Germans, there were—certainly in Bussorah, and probably in other ports in the Gulf—plenty of firms who were only too ready to give the new-comers a trial. As reported by Sir William Ward, even the fear of outside competition, particularly in view of the reputation for commercial efficiency possessed by their rivals, brought about an immediate and sensible reduction in their rates.

The British Companies have now had a good shaking up; they have seen efficiency and cheap rates reaping their due reward. If they meet the competition in the right spirit, and make a serious effort to bring their service and their rates more into line with the requirements of the firms with whom they have to deal, their novel experience will do them no end of good. It is perfectly true that the German Line is subsidized by its Government, though I fancy that the extent of the subsidy is often exaggerated. But there is in this no reason for sitting down under their competition and persisting in the old system, which can, as the Germans have conclusively shown, be improved upon.

The German ships have, it appears, no difficulty whatever in getting cargoes for Europe; the difficulty is to get an out-going cargo, and in order to supply the want the Hamburg-America Line has, so I was informed at Bussorah, been compelled, on more than one occasion, to purchase a cargo and sell in the Gulf on their own account and for what they could get, naturally at a loss.

That the Germans have effected a lodgment in the Gulf is undeniable; that they will maintain it is probable. If, however, the competition is met in the right way there is absolutely no reason why it should prove detrimental to British trade.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PERCY L. LORAINE.

Tehran, October 22, 1907.

[38758] No. 136.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 25.)

(No. 700.)

Sir, *Pera, November 19, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a translation which I have received from the Acting British Consul at Erzeroum of an appeal distributed there, calling on Ottoman subjects of all religions to unite in overthrowing the present "oppressive and autocratic form of government" and obtaining their need, which "is a Constitution—liberty, justice, a Parliament."

The document is interesting only as a further example of the spirit which has recently shown itself in parts of the Asiatic provinces of the Empire in favour of union, irrespective of religious differences, against the present Government, or at least of a determination among Moslems, such as that described in Mr. Shipley's report inclosed

in my despatch No. 130 of the 27th February, to devote themselves to bringing about an alteration in the existing régime while maintaining good relations with their Christian fellow-subjects.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 136.

An "Appeal" to the Inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire.

BROTHERHOOD IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE.

O MUSSULMANS, Christians, Jews—all of you Ottomans! Our native land, beloved mother of us all, is fast sinking under oppression. Wearied out by the tyranny of an autocratic Government, she stretches out her hands and cries for our help. With gentle voice she cries, "Oh! my dear children, be not divided one from the other; do not desert one another; fall not into discord and strife. Unite and be one," she says; and she repeats her cry.

O Ottomans, brothers in the soil! You are even as a family dwelling in one house: and is it not right to exhort the members of such a household to look to the ordering of their affairs and to labour together in unity? It is right! In such case, love of country, humanity, zeal, compel us to devote ourselves to the common weal. Brothers, we cannot help but hear the agony of our land, which cries to Heaven and pierces our hearts like a dagger.

Let us hold out the hand of comradeship to one another; let us love one another like brothers, and work together for the happiness of our country. Our Government, as it now is, pays no heed to law, recks nothing of the general condition of the people; and until it is freed we shall see nor happiness, nor wealth, nor peace. Far from it; this Government will make hell for us, will rack us with cruel tortures, and, like a herd under the goad, they will drive us and use us for their own advantage.

Woe to those who tear down the edifice of the State, who burn our life and sell our motherland, and do all that is against the law to fill the bellies and the pockets of five or ten! These men will steal your gold too, and use to it your undoing.

Poisoning the morals of the people, killing their noble enthusiasm, crushing the life out of intellect and thought, they sow the tares of discord among the good Ottoman grain, and make of the people a tool to serve the ambitious desires of a handful of rapacious men.

Ottomans, in order to escape from this horrible abyss, there is one way, and only one, and that is, through the ordering of the Empire even after the pattern of civilized lands, and the proclaiming of justice, equality, liberty, and right. See you how the nations advance, while we, the laughing-stock of all, slip backwards! Great is our fear, and very low are we fallen to be a byword and accounted as bears and no men in the eye of the world.

O Mussulmans, Christians, and Jews—all of you Ottomans! Your creeds ordain charity toward one another, living peaceably together in friendship and good-will. Our land, which is the common heritage of us all, bids us unite and help each other. How long will this discord persist among you? How long will you consent to this abomination, which is a stumbling-block to you all? How long will you cry, "'Tis the will of God—we are resigned," in the face of oppression and cruelty? How long will you assist as spectators at the ruin of your country? Shake off this black fright which has overwhelmed your hearts! Open your eyes, seek the truth, and ensue it. Then indeed you will see that our country lies under a horrible peril. Then you will understand how we are caught all together in the eddies of a mighty whirlpool. Then will you know the monstrous calamity which is stalking round our heads.

O Ottomans, high and humble, Viziers and Hammals, hear and understand! Without discrimination of race or creed, hear, I say, and understand the need of your country. The oppressive and autocratic Government is responsible before God and the nations for its consent to our miserable condition. Are you not brothers in humanity? Are you not men? Or have you put off your humanity? Have you abandoned courage and zeal? Is there no nobility of soul left in you? No! This is not possible! None of these things is possible. 'Tis but a numbness which has come upon you from the oppression of your Government. 'Twas from numbness that you fell into this condition. And the cure for the evil lies in the will of the people and in their administration, which in power goes ahead of the rule of tyrants, is higher, purer. For the power of the people is more to be dreaded than any other power; and this you must understand.

Know that before the will of the people the most terrible tyranny will shake to its foundations. No ship of State can make way against its blast, but will be overwhelmed in the waves. The most bloody murderer will kneel and cry for mercy before that power. But, to give it life and form, the people must be one and in unity together.

What ruins a country is the want of unity, when men look at each other with the eye of enmity. Put aside, then, questions of race and creed. Religious disputes must not come amongst you. Let not such things drive you apart. Every man, as regards his religion and way of life, is answerable to God alone; but, as touching your country, you are all responsible to it and to each other, for you are all partners in your country. Hear, therefore, her voice when she cries aloud for the help of your strength and your zeal.

O brothers in the soil! You are all children of one land and one State. You are bound to rescue it from the tearful grasp of the tyrant, to order its affairs even as the civilized nations do, and to promote its good. The happiness, safety, freedom of our country, our motherland, our State depend on our working together with a single heart. Our need is a Constitution—liberty, justice, a Parliament. Shout till you are hoarse! Make your voices heard on all sides and publish it in all the land!

[38759] No. 137.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 25.)

(No. 701.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November 19, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to report that since the date of my despatch No. 578 of the 15th September, I have received further accounts from His Majesty's Consul-General at Smyrna of outrages by brigands in the Aidin Vilayet, one of which, when three leading Turks of the district were carried off, took place in the neighbourhood of the Smyrna Aidin Railway.

I fear that sooner or later some serious outrage may be committed on the railway itself, and for this reason I have been persistent in my representations to the Sublime Porte, who now assure me that the Smyrna authorities are doing their utmost to effect the capture of Tchakizji, the brigand Chief.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[38763] No. 138.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 25.)

(No. 705.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November 20, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting on the general situation in that vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 138.

Vice-Consul Dickson to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 22.)

Sir, *Van, October 29, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the Commission of Inquiry on the Turco-Persian frontier question is now complete. It consists of Tahir Pasha, with Generals Daniel Pasha and Ali Pasha, Colonel Shekir Bey, and Towfik Effendi, a nephew of the late Midhat Pasha, and now "Directeur d'Instruction Publique" at Trebizond.

As far as I can gather they are now at Bashkala, waiting for the arrival of the Persian Commission.

I am informed that the appropriated country is now perfectly quiet, most of the inhabitants having fled to Urmia, while Shukri Bey, the nephew of Tahir Pasha, has been installed as Kaimakam of that region.

There has been a fair amount of sheep-stealing going on in the vilayet lately, especially in the Shattakh district, so much so that it has interfered with the sheep trade between here and Aleppo. From Shattakh and Catchel, a village near Shattakh, sheep were raided on two separate occasions, but the "Fedai" in that locality pursued

the Kurds, recovering the sheep and punishing the Kurds. I also hear that Nalik Ishmael, with the Nestorians of Tiari, have made a raid on the Harteshi Kurds of Haji Bey, capturing 100 rifles and some 4,000 sheep. There is no definite news yet, but the Acting Vali tells me he will send to Mar Shimun for an account of the affair, ordering the loot to be given up, failing which he will probably send troops to Tiari in the spring. As these same Kurds stole some 1,800 sheep from the Nestorians last year, also killing four men, I proposed that the Government should only return a percentage of the sheep stolen to the Kurds, take a percentage themselves, and allow the Nestorians to retain a percentage of what was originally theirs; from what he told me, he may possibly do this. In any case I think it would be a very bad thing to allow troops to go into Tiari to punish the Nestorians, and when I have more information on the subject I will let you know if it might be necessary to make representations at Constantinople.

The "Fedai" at Van have been fighting among themselves lately, and three were killed in a brawl the other night, otherwise they have been very quiet. Of course they are very proud of their achievement in assassinating Ali Bey. There is a strong rumour here, however, that the Mushir Zekki Pasha had a hand in his murder, fearing that Ali Bey might get the ear of the Sultan and compromise him.

I am afraid that there will be considerable misery in Van this winter, owing to the poverty and the excessively high prices of all commodities. For instance, the cote of barley, which ten years ago cost 5 piastres and last year cost 30 piastres, this year costs 55 piastres, and will probably rise considerably higher during the winter. The prices of other things have risen nearly in the same proportion, and the cost of living is now terribly high, while the people are much poorer.

The local Turks are greatly perturbed by the Anglo-Russian *entente*, as they think it will greatly strengthen Russia in these parts, while England will only look on, and that their turn will come soon.

I have, &c.
(Signed) B. DICKSON, *Captain*

[38765] No. 139.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 25.)

(No. 707.)

Sir, *Pera, November 20, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to report that the Grand Vizier informs me that the Ottoman Government have determined to take forcible measures to repress the rebellious behaviour of the Kurdish tribes in the eastern provinces of Anatolia, and have concentrated troops at Chemisgusek, in the south-west of the Dersim district, where the Kurds have recently been active. Fighting has indeed actually taken place during the last three days, and some fifty of the tribesmen have been killed.

The situation is, however, complicated by the fact that Ibrahim Pasha, the powerful Chief of the Milli tribe, has shown a tendency to revolt, and as his influence extends over a wide extent of country up to the walls of Diarbekir, in which city also there has been some agitation, affairs have a serious aspect, which naturally causes the Central Government some concern.

Mr. Heard reports that at Bitlis also the Acting Vali has taken energetic measures, and has disarmed the Kurds in the town; and I hear from the Porte that he has also successfully attacked a village held by a robber Chief named Umr in the neighbourhood of the town.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[38848] No. 140.

Herr Buchmann to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 25.)

(No. 116.)

Sir, *Munich, November 23, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your information, the original German text and translation of an article which appeared on the 22nd instant in the Munich "Neueste Nachrichten," entitled, "Germany's interests in Mesopotamia."

I have, &c.
(Signed) L. BUCHMANN.

Inclosure in No. 140.

Extract from the Munich "Neueste Nachrichten" of November 22, 1907.

(Translation.)

"DR. TH. FISCHER, Professor of Geography at the Marburg University, raises a protest against an article which appeared in the geographical magazine, 'Petermann's Mitteilungen,' published at Gotha, and in which it was asserted that Germany had no material interests at all near the Persian Gulf, that no Germans resided there, and that, on the contrary, the owner of the only German firm in those provinces was the Belgian Consul Püttmann. The Professor, who knows all about the conditions prevailing at the Persian Gulf, delivers himself on the subject as follows:—

"'The German imports to Bagdad are much more important than it is generally assumed by those who have no exact knowledge of the commerce in those places. The German firm, Messrs. Berk, Püttmann, and Co., founded in 1894, alone import German wares to the value of 100,000*l.*, and have a yearly turnover, including imports and exports, of about 400,000*l.*; the firm, together with that of Lynch, belong to the foremost trading concerns at Bagdad. German commercial travellers have repeatedly visited those provinces, amongst other representatives being those of some South German chemical works,* and that of a Düsseldorf hardware firm. Germany's commercial relations with the Persian Gulf were up till now dependent on British and French shipping lines calling at Bombay. In the autumn of last year the Hamburg-America Line successfully established a direct service with the ports on the Persian Gulf Bussorah, Mohammerah, Bushire, the islands in the Gulf, Lingah, and Bunder Abbas. At the end of April last the Bussorah Agency informed the Bagdad firms that the next three steamers of the Hamburg-America Line could ship no more cargo. Since the establishment of the new line to the Persian Gulf the German firm, Robert Wönckhaus and Co., formerly at Bushire, settled at Bussorah, with branches in all the ports on the Persian Gulf at which the Hamburg-America Line calls. Messrs. Berk, Püttmann, and Co. occupy now at those places a staff of ten German clerks. In 1894 a German Consul *honoraire* was appointed at Bagdad in the person of Herr Richarz, well known by Orientalists for his great linguistic talents. In 1905 a German Consulate was established at Mosul, and the German Consul at Bagdad is now one *de carrière*. Let us hope that before long a Consular Agency will be established at Bussorah, and that the Bagdad Consul will soon be put on the same footing as the British and Russian Consuls-General there. It follows from all this that indeed it cannot be maintained that Germany has no material interests at the Persian Gulf.'"

[39040] No. 141.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received November 26.)

(No 158.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, November 26, 1907.*

A FEW days ago the local Government offices at Diarbekir were seized by the townsmen and Notables, who demanded that the Vali should be dismissed. Quiet has been restored, the Porte yielding to the popular demand. Foreigners in the town were not in any danger, as order was maintained throughout the incident.

I am sending a full report by to-morrow's bag.

[39072] No. 142.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 27.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 7th November, relative to the cancellation of the Abu Musa Red Oxide Concession.

India Office, November 26, 1907.

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* The original German "Süddeutsche Anilinfabrik" implies that it is a question here of the chemica works, known under that style, at Ludwigshafen on the Rhine, Bavarian Palatinate.

Inclosure 1 in No. 142.

Lieutenant Gabriel to Government of India.

(Confidential.) *Bunder Abbas, October 25, 1907.*

IN amplification of my telegrams dispatched on the 30th September, the 12th and 23rd October, I have the honour to submit my detailed report on the proceedings in connection with the expulsion by the Sheikh of Shargah of the representative and workmen of Haji Hassan-bin-Ali Samaiyeh from Abu Musa. Before dealing with the events subsequent to the receipt by the concessionnaire of the Sheikh's notice, I propose to offer a brief explanation of the delay in the issue of the notice which led to my visiting Lingah on the 1st October, and the subsequently protracted proceedings.

2. Acting on instructions received from Bushire on the 23rd September, I dispatched by special boat the necessary instructions for the Residency Agent, Shargah, together with the draft notice to be addressed by Sheikh Sagar to Hassan-bin-Ali Samaiyeh. His Majesty's ship "Lapwing" arrived at Bunder Abbas on the 24th September, and after waiting here for six days, Commander Gouldsmith informed me that, owing to the necessity of constantly condensing water, his coal supply had dwindled to an extent which I considered to be quite inadequate for the probable steaming requirements. In these circumstances I decided to visit Lingah, and, having ascertained that the notice had not then been served, to request Commander Gouldsmith to complete with coal at Muscat and return to Bassidu as quickly as possible. I took advantage of the visit to Lingah to instruct the Residency Agent regarding the verbal communication to be delivered by him to the concessionnaire. His Majesty's ship "Lapwing" returned to Bassidu on the 6th October, and on the 7th I deemed it advisable to proceed to the pirate coast in order to ascertain the cause of the delay. As already reported, I eventually located Sheikh Sagar and the Residency Agent at Ras-al-Khaima, and there heard that the notice had been duly dispatched to Lingah on the previous day. After persuading the Sheikh as to the necessity of his ascertaining the exact number of the concessionnaire's men on Abu Musa, I returned to Bassidu, and news was received later from the Residency Agent, Lingah, of the delivery of the notice to the concessionnaire at noon on the 10th October, *i.e.*, seventeen days after its dispatch from Bunder Abbas.

3. On arrival at Shargah on the evening of the 16th October, the Residency Agent informed me that the Sheikh had not complied with his undertaking to ascertain the number of men on the island. I therefore again impressed upon him the importance of doing so, and in the result he sent a boat to the island, which returned on the 18th and reported that there were forty labourers. On the morning of the 17th I met the Sheikh by appointment at the British Agency. He informed me that he was prepared to send a sufficient force to the island, but that he feared Germany would take the matter up, and that the concessionnaire would claim damages from him through the Residency: he therefore desired an assurance from Government that he would not subsequently suffer for the action now about to be taken. I replied that I would not fail to inform Government of his expressed fears, but reminded him that he had already, some months previously, warned Hassan-bin-Ali of the termination of the Concession, and that the monopoly granted to Herr Wonckhaus was arranged without reference to Esa-bin-Abdul Latif, the joint concessionnaire.

4. The same afternoon, Sheikh Sagar, accompanied by the Residency Agent, called on me on board the "Lapwing." The Sheikh was manifestly ill at ease, the cause of which was evident later, when he informed me that one of the concessionnaires, Adbulla-bin-Hassan, had arrived in Shargah and had handed him a letter (copy inclosed herewith) from Messrs. Wonckhaus' Lingah agent. He asked what reply he should send, and what he should say to Abdulla-bin-Hassan, who was constantly worrying him. I advised him not to reply to the Germans' letter, and to tell Abdulla that he had only issued the notice after careful consideration, and that he intended that it should be fully obeyed. As the Sheikh appeared to apprehend that the letter was written at the instance of the German Government, I saw fit to disabuse him and to point out that it was written by a German merchant only. Sheikh Sagar then asked what he should do as regards the oxide lying on the beach in the event of a German ship arriving at Abu Musa, as he feared that his guard might shoot some one, should the ship persist in loading. Being uncertain of Government's views as regards allowing Messrs. Wonckhaus to complete any existing orders they may have for oxide, I avoided giving a direct reply, merely

remarking that with the expulsion of the labourers from the island a ship could not very well load, but that in any case uncalled for violence on the part of the guard should be avoided in the absence of any attempt to reoccupy the oxide Colony, which latter contingency should be carefully guarded against by leaving a force of at least thirty men there for a month or six weeks. The Sheikh acquiesced, and added that he would be careful to refer to Bushire should he receive further communications from the German firm.

5. Hearing that I was at the British Agency on the morning of the 19th, Sheikh Sagar, with his uncle, Salim-bin-Sultan, again called on me. The Sheikh appears to place much reliance on the sagacity and matured wisdom of his aged relative, and seemed anxious to engage him in conversation with me, in order to extract some sort of promise of support in the event of his action at Abu Musa involving him in difficulties; but, being aware of his evident intention, I was careful not to commit myself to any compromising statement.

6. I returned the Sheikh's visit at his house on the evening of the 19th October, and told him that I regretted not to have observed any preparations for the dispatch of his force. I reminded him that only eighteen hours remained ere the period stated in the notice would expire, and that, as it was, it would only be possible for his dhows to reach the island in time by being towed most of the way by His Majesty's ship "Lapwing." Evidently inspired by fear instilled by Abdulla-bin-Hassan, who I was told had been worrying the Sheikh all day, the Sheikh seemed inclined to hold back, and suggested waiting a few days in the hope that he could come to an understanding with the concessionnaire. Upon this I advised him to act fully up to his notice, and urged that half-measures at this stage would be worse than useless. I reminded him that, but for Government's action a few years ago, he would have lost Abu Musa altogether, and that in the present case he had asked Government's advice as to how to proceed, and had acted upon it to a point where to draw back would in all probability materially weaken his hold on the island. At the same time I told him that, having tendered him this advice, I must ask him to say at once whether he intended to abide by it or not, as in the latter eventuality His Majesty's ship could not delay longer, and it would simply remain for me to inform Government that he was not desirous of proceeding further. The Sheikh then said that he would go through with the business, and would at once prepare the force for dispatch, and would refuse to see Abdulla-bin-Hassan again. The latter, seeing that the Sheikh was at last firm, left for Debai the same evening.

7. The "Lapwing" sailed for Abu Musa at daybreak on the 20th October and towed the Sheikh's four buggalows and two hired boats for the transport of the oxide labourers to within 4 miles of the island. Having warned Abdulla-bin-Ahmed-bin-Sultan (the Sheikh's cousin, who was in charge of the armed force) against the use of unnecessary violence, I proceeded to the concessionnaire's encampment, and while warning Ahmed-bin-Ali Samaiyeh (the concessionnaire's brother and local representative) of the approach of the force, told him that he had nothing to fear provided he at once obeyed the Sheikh's orders. The armed party then landed at different points on the island and surrounded the camp. The concessionnaire's representative and workmen were cowed and at once consented to leave.

8. Owing to the high wind and consequent heavy sea prevailing, immediate embarkation was impossible, and for the remainder of the day and the greater part of the 21st the coolies were employed in packing up and collecting the mining property on the beach. As the storm showed no signs of abating, on the morning of the 22nd I advised the Sheikh's men to embark and dispatch the coolies and their families, 100 souls in all, at a sheltered spot on the further side of the island. This was done, and by 4 P.M. all were on board and the camp evacuated, the Sheikh's men then employing themselves in pulling down the mat huts, some twenty-six in number. The two buggalows, with the workmen and their effects, together with Ahmed-bin-Ali Samaiyeh, left for Lingah at 8 P.M.

9. Want of additional buggalows prevented the immediate dispatch to Lingah of the greater part of the concessionnaire's mining requisites, and these were therefore collected and placed on the beach ready for dispatch at the first opportunity. They comprise 4 bullock-carts and 1 heavy iron wagon, about 200 baskets for loading oxide, together with 4 small barges for carrying oxide to the steamers. I should have desired to have remained at Abu Musa pending the removal of this property, but to do so was out of the question, the "Lapwing" having run short of provisions and stores of every kind. In these circumstances, I dispatched Esa-bin-Abdul Latif, who had accompanied me from Shargah, with instructions to the Residency Agent that he should advise the Sheikh to send two more buggalows for the transport of the remaining property. Having warned the Sheikh's representative not to allow any visitors to settle again in the oxide Colony, I left the island on the morning of the 23rd October, and proceeded to Bunder Abbas, calling *en route* at Henjam to dispatch telegrams.

10. The fact that the usual anchorage for steamers is in the immediate vicinity of the oxide Colony and that from this side of the island the Sheikh's flagstaff is entirely hidden from view, coupled with the importance of emphasizing the fact that the Sheikh has resumed full proprietary rights in the oxide quarries, led me to advise the Sheikh's representative to fly the flag at a point in the Colony which is in full view of approaching ships. He said he would do so after receiving the Sheikh's sanction. I trust my action has the approval of Government.

11. Adverting to the letter from Messrs Wonckhaus' Lingah agent to Sheikh Sagar, I do not know how far the Government of India will be disposed to recognize Wonckhaus' claim to the ownership of the oxide now lying on the beach, which I estimate as amounting to some 500 tons. I venture to think, however, that, even allowing them to base their claim on the terms of their illegal contract with Hassan-bin-Ali Samaiyeh, they would have some difficulty in substantiating it, while the claim to the mines and the Concession for them as security for advances paid can scarcely be considered seriously. In view, however, of the threat contained in the Germans' letter to send men to protect "their property," I desire to repeat here the recommendation made in my telegram of the 23rd October as to the advisability of sending a gun-boat to Abu Musa again as soon as possible, pending the removal of the remaining property, and for the purpose of advising the Sheikh's representative in the event of a German ship arriving and persisting in loading with oxide.

12. In conclusion, it remains for me to bring to the notice of the Government of India the ready assistance and help afforded by Lieutenant Commander Gouldsmith, of His Majesty's ship "Lapwing," whose action in towing the six dhows for the greater part of the way from Shargah to Abu Musa alone enabled the Sheikh's force to arrive promptly at the conclusion of the ten days' grace.

13. A copy of this letter is being forwarded to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

Inclosure 2 in No. 142.

Messrs. Wonckhaus and Co. to Sheikh Sagar-bin-Khalid.

Dear Sir, *Lingah, October* 31, 1907.

MESSRS. HAJI HASSAN-BIN-ALI SOMEY AND CO. inform us that you have sent a notice requesting them to remove from Abu Musa all coolies, carts, and other implements, and to stop working the oxide mines.

You are aware that we have contracted with the above firm a large quantity of oxide for a number of years, and have paid over to them very considerable advances. We beg to inform you that the oxide lying on the seashore in Abu Musa is our property, and that we consider the mines and the Concession for them as a security for the advances paid. If you force Messrs. Haji Hassan-bin-Ali Somey and Co. to withdraw their coolies and representative, we shall have to send over some men ourselves to protect our property.

We contracted for a quantity of oxide with the mentioned firm, knowing that their leasehold is a "*bonâ fide* one." It would be idle on your part to dispute this, as you yourself were a partner to it in the beginning, and sold your share to Hassan-bin-Ali. The relative documents still exist.

We therefore take the liberty to advise you to withdraw your notice and abstain from further interference in the working of the oxide mines in Abu Musa

We are, &c.

(*Per pro.* Robert Wonckhaus and Co.),
(Signed) THOMAS BROWN.

[39210] No. 143.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 28.)

Sir, *India Office, November 27, 1907.*

WITH reference to the correspondence as to the Muscat Arbitration, ending with the letter from this Office of the 16th September last, I am directed to inclose, to be laid before the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a telegram from the Political Agent at Muscat to the Government of India.

It will be seen that the French Consul has been instructed by his Government to settle the final details, in consultation with the British Consul, as soon as the latter has received similar instructions from His Majesty's Government.

The action to be taken by the two Consuls in concert was laid down in the Memorandum communicated to the French Ambassador on the 24th October, 1905, and accepted by the French Government, as stated in Lord Lansdowne's despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris of the 8th November, 1905. The principles on which the outstanding details were to be settled between the two Consuls were laid down in the Memorandum of the 6th August last to the French Ambassador, replying to His Memorandum of the 8th October, 1906.

Mr. Morley would be glad to be informed whether any communication has been received from the French Government as to the concerted action to be taken locally by the two Consuls, and whether, in the absence of such communication, Sir E. Grey is of opinion that His Majesty's Consul should be instructed to proceed on the lines laid down in the Memorandum mentioned above.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 143.

Major Grey to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Muscat, October 15, 1907.*

THE following telegram has been addressed to Bushire:—

"Flag question.

"I have been informed officially by the French Consul that he has received instructions to settle final details with me, and that he is at my disposal as soon as similar instructions have been received by me. I have informed him that I am awaiting instructions from the Government of India. He says that on 23rd October the French gun-boat 'Surprise' will arrive at Muscat. I presume that she is destined to convey him to Suram for the purpose of making final inquiries. I propose asking 'Sphinx' to remain here in these circumstances until departure of 'Surprise.'"

Inclosure 2 in No. 143.

Major Grey to Government of India.

(Telegraphic.) *Muscat, October 25, 1907.*

FOLLOWING sent to Political Resident, Persian Gulf:—

"My telegram of 15th October: French flag.

"'Surprise' arrived on 22nd October, and left for Aden on 23rd October."

Inclosure 3 in No. 143.

Major Grey to Government of India.

(Confidential.)

Sir, *Muscat, October 19, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for your information, a copy of letter dated the 19th instant, and its inclosures, which I have addressed to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, Bushire.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. G. GREY.

Inclosure 4 in No. 143.

Major Grey to Major Cox.

Sir, *Muscat, October 19, 1907.*

IN connection with my telegram of the 15th instant, I have the honour to forward copies of the French Consul's letter dated the 9th instant, and my reply dated the 15th idem.

2. A copy of this letter and its inclosures will be forwarded to the Government of India in the Foreign Department.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. G. GREY.

Inclosure 5 in No. 143.

M. Laronce to Major Grey.

Monsieur et cher Collègue, *Mascate, le 9 Octobre, 1907.*

J'AI l'honneur de porter à votre connaissance que j'ai été avisé officiellement du règlement définitif de la question des boutriers Mascatais-Français entre les Cabinets de Paris et de Londres.

Sitôt que les instructions nécessaires vous seront parvenues, je me tiendrai à votre entière disposition pour nous entendre sur les derniers détails de cette affaire.

Je me loue sans réserves de la solution de cette question, qui a si longtemps divisé nos deux Consulats et qui était susceptible de soulever certains conflits regrettables.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) R. LARONCE.

Inclosure 6 in No. 143.

Major Grey to M. Laronce.

Monsieur et cher Collègue, *Mascate, le 15 Octobre, 1907.*

J'AI l'honneur de vous accuser réception de votre lettre du 9 courant et de vous en remercier.

En ce qui concerne la question des boutres, je n'ai pas encore reçu les instructions dont il s'agit. Aussitôt réception, je vous en préviendrai, afin que nous puissions terminer cette affaire, qui nous a divisé si longtemps.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) W. G. GREY.

[39162] No. 144.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received November 28.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosure in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 24th ultimo, relative to affairs of the Aden Hinterland.

India Office, November 27, 1907.

Inclosure in No. 144.

Extract from the Weekly Newsletter of the Resident at Aden of September 28, 1907.

A REPORT has reached me this week that one of the Turkish Chieftains, Sheikh Ahmed Noman the Dubhani, has recently returned with four medals and a sword from Constantinople, and is talking about renewed Turkish claims over the Wadi Shaab. If there are any actual encroachments, I have no doubt that I shall very soon hear of them.

[39481] No. 145.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 2.)

(No. 712. Confidential.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November 25, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch from the British Consul-General at Bagdad containing a Report on the facility which exists for joining the Tigris near Bagdad to the Euphrates by a canal suitable for irrigation purposes and also for navigation.

You will no doubt think it right to communicate on the subject with some British firm of engineers whose work lies in this line, or perhaps with the Egyptian Government, as the matter is one that merits attention, and, although the scheme may not lead to any immediate results, it may eventually prove of value.

I should be glad to learn in any case what action you decide to take.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 145.

Acting Consul-General Ramsay to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 118. Strictly Confidential.)

Sir, *Bagdad, October 19, 1907.*

AS promised in my despatch No. 117, dated the 19th instant, I have the honour to submit a Report on the facility which exists for joining the Tigris near Bagdad to the Euphrates by a canal suitable for irrigation purposes and also for navigation.

2. Unaided I could only have brought to your Excellency's notice the following arguments, which are obvious to any one who has lived at Bagdad:—

(1.) A navigable canal to join Bagdad to the Euphrates near Faluja must be practicable because the steamer "Euphrates" was brought through such a canal in 1838, and because numbers of laden vessels of country make have during the summer of 1907 come along the existing waterway (it can scarcely be called a canal) from the Upper Euphrates to Bagdad.

(2.) Such a canal should bring in a handsome revenue from navigation dues, because it would lead to an important commercial centre at Bagdad, it would carry all the pilgrim and goods traffic which passes between Persia and India and the shrines at Karbala and Hedjef, and it would enable the lime and bitumen found on the Upper Euphrates to be brought to Bagdad at a reasonable cost for carriage. It would provide a good market for the grain produce of the Upper Euphrates, and it might develop a considerable trade in firewood, which is very expensive at Bagdad, and which I understand to be plentiful along the banks of the proposed canal and along certain parts of the Upper Euphrates.

(3.) Irrigation from the canal would certainly be easy in a southerly direction, as the general, but very gentle, slope of the country is to the south, and the map prepared by Messrs. W. H. Allen and Co. in 1885 of the "Surveys of Ancient Babylon," by Commander W. Beaumont Selby and Lieutenants Collingwood and Bewsher, shows the extensive area of low-lying ground that was then under water.

(4.) The canal, coupled with improved communication on the Upper Euphrates and

an extension of the railway from Aleppo to the Euphrates, might conceivably become an important artery of through commerce between Europe and the East, and it would at any rate be a serious competitor of the proposed Bagdad Railway, as far as the commerce between Bagdad and the north-west was concerned.

(5.) The canal is largely ready-made, and would require little more than head-works at each end, locks, and repairs to the existing embankments, with arrangements for passing the cross drainage.

3. The gross income to be expected from the canal can only be estimated after careful inquiries have been made, and after a rough preliminary survey and project have been prepared by experts. The net profit would, of course, largely depend on the terms which the Turkish Government was willing to grant. Unless the Turkish Government crushed the scheme by imposing a too onerous first charge on the profits, I cannot see how it could fail to be profitable to its promoters and highly beneficial to the country, not only directly, by bringing a large area under cultivation, but also indirectly, as forming an example of what can be done in this country by scientific irrigation. Nothing further can, however, be done until permission is obtained from the Porte to make surveys and until money is forthcoming to pay for the surveys.

4. M. Cugnin is a French irrigation engineer, who has been employed for more than a year and a-half in studying the Euphrates and preparing a project for repairing the dam across the Hindiya Canal, which has now become the Euphrates. Some weeks ago, when I was out shooting with him, the conversation turned on the possibilities of utilizing and controlling the waterway between Bagdad and the Euphrates which had been opened by the recent floods. I found M. Cugnin much interested in the subject, and he informed me that, as it was hopeless to expect French enterprise to take up the matter, he would give me any assistance in his power, and show me a report that he had seen and which had been written on the same subject some years ago by a French engineer. M. Cugnin has had the advantage of obtaining access to the official papers in the Turkish Government offices at Bagdad, and also of discussing the matter with the two other French engineers who have been employed at Bagdad for many years; also he has made a careful study of the Euphrates. With all these advantages he has drawn up for me a careful and exhaustive historical note on the existing waterway between Bagdad and the Euphrates, and I should not be surprised if he was right in thinking that the site of Bagdad was originally chosen because of the then existing waterway. I inclose for your Excellency's information a translation of M. Cugnin's note and of his two sketches. M. Cugnin has told me that he would be willing and able to undertake any further inquiry or survey that may be required. He thinks that it would take about four months to prepare a contoured map and to collect sufficient information to enable an opinion to be formed as to the financial prospects of the proposal. Any capitalists who were inclined to invest their money in such a project would no doubt require the professional opinion of an expert in whom they had confidence, but they might be glad to take advantage of M. Cugnin's offer for the preliminary survey. He is in an excellent position to execute it, as he could use his own experience of Irak and all the local resources. For any extensive work he would naturally expect remuneration, but the settlement of this would not be likely to cause any serious difficulty.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. RAMSAY, *Major, Officiating Political Resident in Turkish Arabia, and Acting British Consul-General, Bagdad.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 145.

Report on the Saklawya Canal.

THE existence of the Saklawya Canal seems to go back to the most remote antiquity. According to certain old documents, it was the northern boundary of the earthly paradise of the Chaldeans. It is conceivable, besides, that at a certain time this canal was a branch ("faux bras") of the Euphrates. Everything tends even to show that in prehistoric times, when the flood waters hollowed out the valley of the Euphrates, the wide bed of Saklawya, which crosses tracts of gypsum bearing marl, was made before the narrower and less direct bed in which the whole course of the Euphrates is to-day concentrated, that is to say, that originally the whole River Euphrates occupied the Saklawya bed and flowed into the Tigris near Bagdad.

However that may be, the Saklawya Canal formerly had a considerable importance, in view of the intercourse which it promoted between the middle region of the Tigris and that of the Euphrates, and one may fairly attribute to the importance of this intercourse the choice of the site of the town of Bagdad, at the very point where this canal debouched into the Tigris. It was the waters of this canal which quickened into life the plains on the right bank of the Tigris near Bagdad, plains formerly so fertile, but which are to-day nothing but a desert.

As late as 1838 this canal was in working order, and a steamer is reported at this time to have passed by this channel from the Tigris to the Euphrates.* It is permissible to think that, little by little, the entrance to the canal became larger, and that the dykes which formerly protected the sides ceased to control the waters of the river. Certain it is that, at the time of the great floods, the discharge of the canal became so large that the whole plain round Bagdad was inundated, and that the low-lying portions of the town suffered considerable damage. Instead of seeking to remedy this situation by raising and strengthening the dykes and by reducing the entrance to the canal to the necessary size, the only idea was to dam it. This senseless decision was carried out about 1847–8. The work was done by means of "saussages" and fascines, according to the local custom; the banks of the canal were raised, and Bagdad could now breathe freely, having nothing more to fear from the Euphrates' floods.

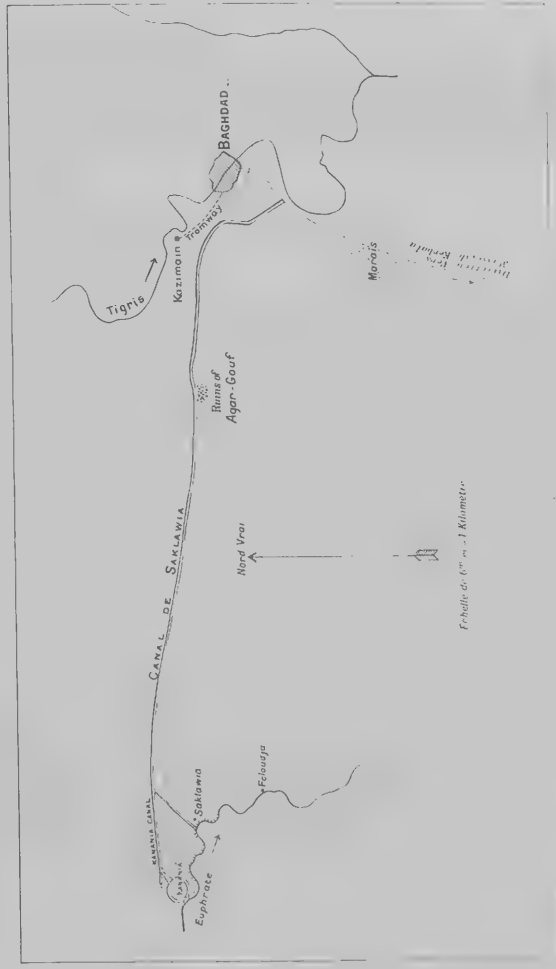
But the inconvenience of such a radical solution was soon felt. There was no longer any direct intercourse between the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates, and no more irrigation of the plain or of the gardens on the right bank. In 1869 a wish began to be felt to go back to the old state of affairs; but, instead of finding for the head of the canal a place near the old one, or, better still, a little lower down, the unhappy idea was hit on of placing the head 6 kilom. above the first one, in the general direction of the valley, in a concave part of the bank, and, moreover, in soil recently deposited and eminently unsuitable. A combination of all these unfavourable conditions led to failure.

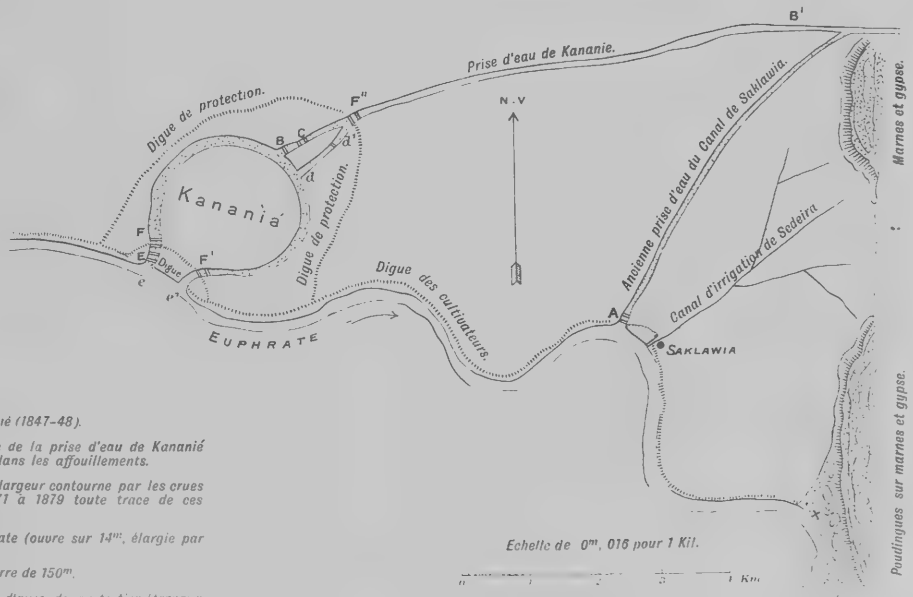
First of all, they opened the new feeder canal (the Kananiyeh Canal, in the direction of B, B); then they attempted to build a lock 8 metres wide, without troubling themselves about the consistency of the soil on which the foundations of the work were placed. In using pumps, in order to facilitate the work of the masons, they raised, according to some witnesses, as much sand as water, thereby undermining the very ground on which the work rested. On the occurrence of the first flood, and before the masonry was even finished, everything disappeared and was swallowed up in the sand, and the canal, which had been opened to its full width before the completion of the lock which was to protect the entrance, being eaten away by the water, soon became 80 instead of 10 metres wide. Nevertheless, the erosion of the bed of the canal disclosed a fairly solid bank some way below the head of the canal. In 1871 a new lock of 8 metres was raised upon this solid foundation; but no precautions were taken to protect the unsubstantial banks against which the work rested, and nothing was done to make the lock itself and the approaches safe from submersion. At the first flood the works were covered by the water and the two banks washed away, each to a width of 30 to 40 metres, while the unhappy lock was left on its foundation in the middle of the inordinately enlarged canal.

Not being able to understand the cause of these failures, the authors of the project thought of nothing more than to shut up this new canal, as had happened to the first. They were doubtless pushed to this extreme measure by the cries of the population of Bagdad, who on each false move were exposed to fresh inundations.

The earthen barrier, which was constructed with this object at the entrance of the new canal at C, was not defended any more than the preceding works by raised banks above flood-level, and the river, overflowing in every direction, took no time in wearing away a new passage in the direction d, d', and swamped the canal as if nothing had been done. The floods of the next years completed the destruction, and in 1879 no trace was to be seen of the work which had been carried out, except the Kananiyeh Canal with its yawning mouth 80 metres wide, through which every flood found an easy passage to set in alarm the people of Bagdad. To put an end to this state of affairs, an attempt was made to find a new bed for the Euphrates in the direction of e, e', and to dam the river completely at E to a width of 150 metres. This operation was all the more difficult because the new bed of the river, e, e', had only been dug 4 metres wide and 1 metre below the level of low water. Happily for the success of the enterprise, the soil was loose and the bed of the new cut could be enlarged as the progress of the barrage advanced. This barrage was executed in fascines according to the method in use for "barrages volants."

* The steamer passed from the Euphrates to the Tigris.—J. R.





A. Barrage du Canal de Saklawié (1847-48).

B. Ecluse de 8m, et ouverture de la prise d'eau de Kananié (1869), l'écluse a disparu dans les affouillements.

C. Barrage en terre de 80m de largeur contourne par les crues suivant ZZ' (1871) de 1871 à 1879 toute trace de ces ouvrages a disparu.

e. e'. dérivation de l'Euphrate (ouvre sur 14m, élargie par les eaux).

E. Barrage en fascinages et terre de 150m.

F F F'. Barrages en terre et digues de protection (travaux exécutés en 1880 et 81.

Instead of "bardi" (a kind of marsh grass) and straw, which are not forthcoming in the locality, tamarisk branches were used for the construction of fascines, and the thorny brushwood of "astralaga" and "mimosa" were used for the filling up. The "sausages" made for this work were not less than 50 metres long and 3·50 metres in diameter. Hundreds of men were employed both to make and to move them. At the moment of closing the dam the wash produced upstream was so great that the noise of the water falling could be heard more than 10 kilom. off, and when the dam was actually closed it could be seen that a hole more than 15 metres deep had been hollowed out lower down, in the dammed bed of the river. There is no doubt that to the length of the "sausages" and the great resistance of this method of making fascines must be attributed the success of a work carried out in such unfavourable conditions. Behind the dam of fascines, for greater security, a second dam was made of earth above flood level at F, and a second similar dam at F'. An insubmersible dyke was built between these two works, and two similar dykes connected them with the dykes constructed by the cultivators to protect their fields against inundation. Finally, through excess of precaution, the Kananiyeh Canal was closed by a third dam made of earth at F'', and this dam was, like the others, connected by dykes raised above flood level to the dykes of the cultivators. It is estimated that the barrage of fascines cost £ T. 18,000, the earthen barrages £ T. 6,000, and the connecting dykes £ T. 3,000, a total of £ T. 37,000 [*sic*], or about 850,000 fr. Adding to these sums what had previously been spent since the opening of the Kananiyeh Canal, there is no doubt that 1,500,000 fr. were spent.

At the beginning of this year (1907) the dykes were broken and a new canal formed near Kananiyeh; in a little time the opening was 200 metres wide and the depth at low water is actually 3 metres. It is this opening which they are at the present moment trying to close by a dam made of fascines.

If it is wished to establish a navigation service on the Euphrates, it will be absolutely necessary to re-establish communication between the two rivers by means of the Saklawya Canal. The usefulness of this communication is felt so strongly that in the course of this year a fairly large number of boats have profited by it to bring lime and bitumen from Hit to Bagdad. This canal will render possible a steam navigation service between Bagdad and Meskeneh, on the Euphrates, 90 kilom. from Aleppo; consequently there is no doubt that merchandize and travellers will always use this waterway in order to go from Bagdad to Constantinople, and it will thus become an important highway.

The canal is 75 kilom. long from Saklawya village to the bridge at Khur, near the Tigris; a level taken in olden times gave a difference in level of 9 metres between the two ends; the canal has therefore a fall of ·12 metres in the kilometre. It would be enough in the beginning to make only one barrage, regulated with a lock at the intake of Saklawya, to re-establish communication at all seasons. The flow of the Euphrates being extremely regular, without any sudden floods, it is possible to employ small sluice gates, and consequently the opening and shutting of the dam can be performed without mechanical means. The width of the barrage ought to be 20 metres, and the locks to be 8 metres wide and to have 50 metres of available length. The cost of construction would be about 500,000 fr., to which should be added an expenditure of 100,000 fr. for strengthening the existing dykes.

There is no doubt that the income made by the passage of boats through the lock and the utilization of land which could be irrigated by this canal would be extremely remunerative in proportion to the capital engaged in this work.

A contoured plan ("un plan coté tachéométrique"), covering a considerable area, would be necessary to show what area of land is irrigable from the canal.

(Signed) L. CUGNIN.

Baydad, October 12, 1907.

[39483] No. 146.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 2.)

(No. 714.)

Sir, *Pera, November* 26, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Resident and Consul-General at Bagdad on the subject of the right of British vessels to navigate the Tigris above Bagdad.

The original request for a report arose out of the representations made by the

Ottoman Ambassador in London in 1894, in consequence of His Majesty's then Consul-General having proceeded to Samara in the "Comet." Although it may not be expedient to raise now the question in an official form, I propose, subject to your approval, to inform His Majesty's Consul-General that if events or special circumstances suggest or favour an opportunity of navigating the Tigris above Bagdad, there is no objection to his taking advantage of it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 146.

Acting Consul-General Ramsay to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 115.)

Bagdad, October 16, 1907.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to submit a somewhat belated reply to Sir Philip Currie's despatch, dated the 23rd October, 1894, in which the Consul-General was instructed to report whether he could find any documents to support a claim on the part of the British Government to a right of the Consul-General at Bagdad to navigate the Tigris above Bagdad, and further instructing him to state his opinion as to the importance of maintaining such a right, should it in fact exist.

2. I inclose, for your Excellency's information, a Memorandum which I have prepared from the papers available here, and which forms the basis of the arguments and conclusions set forth below.

3. It appears that as early as 1769 our armed vessels were seen 300 miles up the Euphrates, and that in 1775 the only armed vessels owned by the Pasha of Bagdad were protected, commanded, and partially armed by Englishmen, while they actually flew the British flag.

In 1803 the Imperial Ottoman Diploma, issued to the British Consul at Bagdad, authorizes him to go where he considered necessary "by land or by sea." I cannot help thinking that "by land or by sea" is a mistranslation for "by land or by water," or, at any rate, that the words used in the original document are capable of being translated by the latter phrase. There is no place to which the Consul could go by sea from Bagdad, and to visit which he would need the permission of the Turkish Government. I therefore suggest that the original document should be examined, to see whether it does not in fact admit that the Consul "in the City of Bagdad and its environs" has the right to go where he considers necessary, both by land and by water.

4. The next important document is the Firman of 1834. When considering the value of this document, it should, I think, be remembered that the steamers to which it referred were to be brought overland from the Mediterranean Sea and put together on the banks of the Euphrates, hundreds of miles from its mouth, in one of the inland districts of the Turkish Empire. Seeing that these were armed vessels, Turkish permission was naturally required to their importation, but it would have been equally required if the steamers had been meant for use on the high seas. I do not know whether the papers in the Embassy will support my contention that the Firman was probably asked for rather to obtain facility for the import than to obtain permission for the navigation of the river. The wording of the Firman clearly grants us the right to navigate, but the view of the matter expressed above appears to be worth remembering, especially as, in fact, we did not limit ourselves to two vessels subsequent to the issue of the Firman.

In 1837 the British steamer "Euphrates" went 20 miles above Bagdad, and only returned because of an accident to the rudder.

In 1838 the same steamer went up the Euphrates as far as Hit, came from the Euphrates to the Tigris by the Saklawiya Canal, and went up the Tigris to Kut Abdulla, near Mosul.

In 1839 we had a fleet of four armed vessels in Mesopotamia, *i.e.*, the "Assyria," the "Nimrod," the "Nitocris," and the "Euphrates."

In 1841 the "Nitocris" and "Nimrod" went as far as Beles (Meskeneh) on the Euphrates, while the other two steamers explored the rivers to the mouth of Mesopotamia, and proved that steam communication was possible between the Tigris and the Euphrates by way of the Hai Canal. The Hai Canal joins the Tigris at Kut, to the Euphrates at Suk-es-Shioukh.

In 1842 all the vessels were taken away, except the "Nitocris." In 1843 and 1846 the "Nitocris" went above Bagdad. In the latter year she went to the place where the Tigris forces its way through the Hamrin Hills.

5. Up to this period I have not been able to find any written authority for our armed vessels to navigate the rivers of Mesopotamia other than the Firman of 1834, which only refers to the Euphrates, and which does not, on the face of it, refer to armed vessels. I think that there must have been some document which has been overlooked.

Writing in 1844 to the Embassy, the late Sir Henry Rawlinson, a writer whose statements are worthy of the greatest respect, talks about "preserving in active exercise the right which has been conceded to the British Government, by special permission of the Porte, of steam navigation on the rivers of Mesopotamia." The Firman of 1834 only refers to the Euphrates. To what did Rawlinson refer? In writing to the Bombay Government, which could not be supposed to be so well-informed on matters concerning Turkey, Sir Henry Rawlinson said, in 1845: "The right of navigating the rivers of Mesopotamia with armed vessels, it may also be observed, was obtained with some difficulty by a special Firman from the Sultan. . . ." Here he not only speaks of the rivers of Mesopotamia, but of armed vessels, which are not specially mentioned in the Firman of 1834.

Again, the Vizierial letter of 1861 states that the Embassy had asked for a renewal of the orders "which were sent concerning the British steamers and boats authorized by Her Majesty to ply on the Rivers Tigris and Euphrates."

6. In 1852 the "Nitocris" was replaced by the "Comet," which was an old vessel, and probably not fit to battle with the strong current above Bagdad. Aitchison's Treaties states that the Porte provisionally sanctioned the retention of the "Comet" in 1864, but at that time the Turkish Government was urging that the "Comet" and Lynch's steamers were on the same footing.

In 1869 the Porte agreed to the replacement of the "Comet" "se trouvant sur les rivières de Mésopotamie," and in 1875 the Porte agreed that the "Comet" should continue, as in the past, to remain on the rivers of Mesopotamia, according to the custom previously established. I have not been able to show that any vessel called the "Comet" went above Bagdad, perhaps because no such vessel had been capable of doing so. The "Comet" was old in 1852, when she first arrived; by 1867 she was so dilapidated that she could not be repaired; and by 1879 she was useless.

In 1884 the Porte agreed to the old "Comet" being replaced by the new "Comet," and announced that the new vessel could enter the river and take up her place at Bagdad ("aller stationner à Bagdad"). It seems from the papers connected with this subject that the Porte had objected to the new "Comet," chiefly on the ground that she was more heavily armed than the old "Comet," and when this matter was cleared up to the satisfaction of the Porte the new vessel was allowed to come to Bagdad to relieve the old vessel. This is clearly the meaning of the *pro-memorid* from the Porte, but I imagine that the Turkish Government has seized upon the words "aller stationner à Bagdad," and wishes to maintain that they amount to a prohibition, accepted by us, against the "Comet" going above Bagdad. It seems to me that they prove quite as effectually that the "Comet" is not to leave Bagdad for the purpose of going either up or down stream.

7. The correspondence of 1885 and 1894 is so short and so comparatively recent as to call for little special notice from me. I may, however, call attention to the fact that we are no longer bound by Lord Kimberley's promise of the 6th June, 1894, that the Consul-General would not take the "Comet" above Bagdad without the consent of the Turkish Government, because the Turkish Embassy in its note of the 4th October, 1894, denied our right to take the "Comet" above Bagdad in any circumstances.

8. I think that we may be able to claim the right to take the "Comet" anywhere we please on the rivers of Mesopotamia, on any or all of the following grounds:—

(1.) Up to the year 1885 the Consul-General has not only gone himself, but has sent the ships at his disposa wherever he thought fit, without objection on the part of the Turkish Government.

(2.) The Diploma of 1802 authorizes the Consul to go where he considers necessary by land or water [? sea], and no one is permitted to interfere with him or anything connected with him.

(3.) That in 1869 the Porte agreed to the "Comet" being on the rivers of Mesopotamia without exception, and that this right was confirmed in 1875 by the Porte, with the further explanation that the established custom was to be observed in future.

(4.) That there is nothing in the old records or in the past practice to support the Turkish contention that the British ship of war is limited to the passage of the Tigris as far as Bagdad.

(5.) That it is absurd to argue that if the "Comet" goes above Bagdad other Powers will claim a similar privilege. Why should they make such a claim merely because the "Comet" goes above Bagdad? No doubt any foreign Powers who think about the subject at all, think that we have the right, which we have exercised in the past, to go where we please.

9. The other point on which the Consul-General has been asked to report, is as to the importance of maintaining our right of free movement, should it be susceptible of proof that it exists. I think that it is important, and for the following reasons:—

(1.) It is a mistake to give up a right which may be of great value in circumstances which are not at present foreseen.

(2.) If we obtain any Concessions for irrigation or minerals, it might be most important for the Consul-General, or other British subjects, to have the right to go either up the Tigris or on the other rivers of Mesopotamia by the most expeditious means

(3.) There are a number of British subjects at Samara, and large numbers of British subjects annually visit Samara. They may at any time require assistance or support, and the Consul-General would suffer a certain amount of loss of local importance if it became known that he could only go to Samara by road, and was prohibited from going there in the "Comet."

(4.) There are continual complaints of travellers being robbed between Bagdad and Samara, both by road and by river. It might tend to increase the security on the river if it was known that the "Comet" occasionally passed up it.

(5.) There being no roads in the country, the river is the natural highway, and it would be easier to push British trade north of Bagdad if the country could be conveniently visited.

(6.) Already an English oil engine and pump has been erected half-way between Bagdad and Samara, and I hope to see the number largely increased.

(7.) Sometimes, when there are floods, the river is the only practicable road to the north of Bagdad.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. RAMSAY, *Major, Officiating Political Resident in Turkish Arabia, and Acting British Consul-General, Bagdad.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 146.

Chronological Memorandum regarding the Navigation of the Rivers of Mesopotamia by Government vessels, prepared from Papers in the Resident's Office at Bagdad.

[*Note.*—In the marginal references to authorities, where the number and year of a file is given, the reference is to the files of the Resident's office. The letters "I.F.O.P." stand for the Indian Foreign Office Précis, which is dated the 12th August, 1883. The term "book" refers to a small book printed in Calcutta in 1871 and entitled "Précis containing information in regard to the first connection of the Honourable East India Company with Turkish Arabia, as far as the same can be traced from the records of the Bombay Government . . . between A.D. 1616 and 1800." The term "History I.N." stands for History of the Indian Navy, by Lieutenant C. R. Low (1877).]

Pp. 52 and 54 of book. 1760. The Pasha of Bagdad asked the Agent of the Company at Bussorah to help him with his ships against the Muntafic Arabs. The agents of the Company sailed 300 miles up the Euphrates and met the Pasha at Um-el-Abbas.

P. 57 of book. 1774. The agent wrote to the Pasha to say that he had brought the ships which the Pasha had commissioned him to buy, and that they carried fourteen guns each, and were suitable for the Tigris and Euphrates. In thanking him, the Pasha said, "I must rely on you and on my Musaleem to employ them in such a manner as you may think best for my interest."

P. 61 of book. 1775. The agent wrote to the Pasha that he had taken the Pasha's ships to Bushire to prevent them from falling into the hands of the Persians. The agent added, "The Governor and Council are so much in need of their fleet in India that they cannot spare a cruiser to protect your ketches, nor men to man them."

The position of the Pasha's ships is somewhat explained by Low's "History of the Indian Navy." Vol. i, p. 166.

In 1775 the Persians besieged Bussorah, where there was a squadron of British ships, "besides two other ketches of fourteen guns each, built at Bombay for the Pasha of Bagdad. . . . . These ketches are commanded," says Parsons, who had arrived at Bussorah overland from Bagdad, "by an English midshipman in the Company's service, and have on board a few English sailors; the remainder of the crew are Turks. They carry British colours."

1798. A British officer was appointed to reside at Bagdad. P. 2, Aitchison's Treaties.

1802. An Imperial Ottoman Diploma was issued to Mr. Harford Jones on the 2nd November, stating that the British Ambassador had informed the Porte that he had for the present assigned and established as Consul in the city of Bagdad and its environs Harford Jones, Esq. "We have given him our Imperial Berat . . . . that should the said Consul find it necessary to travel in any part of the country, either by land or by sea, at any stations or ports he may arrive at no one shall molest him or his servants, or cattle or baggage, guides, or anything connected with him." P. 9, Aitchison's Treaties, and Grant's "India," vol. ii, 3rd edition.

1821. Mr. Rich, the Resident, had a "yacht" in front of the Residency. I have not been able to find any description of this yacht, beyod that it was a sailing vessel. P. 112 of book.

1834. A Firman was issued on the 20th December allowing two steamers to navigate the Euphrates by turns, as long as it was convenient to both parties. This permission was granted for the purpose of facilitating commerce, and as it states that the river Euphrates flows "at a small distance from the city of Bagdad," it seems reasonable to suppose that it was given on the supposition that the Euphrates was the name of the river nearest to Bagdad. P. 16 of Aitchison's Treaties.

1837. The "Euphrates" steamed up to Bagdad and, passing through the bridge of boats, proceeded 20 miles up the stream, when an accident to her rudder necessitated her return. "History I.N.," vol. ii, p. 42.

One of the above steamers sank, and the other was made over to the East India Company. P. 1 of "I.F.O.P."

On the 21st August the Resident wrote: "The steamer 'Euphrates' may be applied to any necessary purpose at any season on the Tigris as far as this city, and on the rise of waters perhaps to near Mosul; on the Euphrates, during April, May, June, and a part of July, she would pass also even to Bir, and up to the entrance of the Lamlun marshes at any time." P. 21, file of 1834.

1838. The steamer "Euphrates" went up the River Euphrates as far as Hit. The Commander said: "It was not without difficulty and hard labour that we succeeded in passing the tortuous windings and frequent strong rushes and eddies of the river in these celebrated marshes" (*i.e.*, the Lamlun marshes). "History I.N.," vol. ii p. 43.

In the same year Lieutenant Lynch brought the steam-ship "Euphrates" down the Saklawiya Canal, and he succeeded in ascending the Tigris to a higher point than had ever yet been achieved. This was to Koot Abdulla, near Mosul, thereby providing the navigability of the river so far, during freshes, by steam vessels.

1839. The "Assyria," the "Nitocris," and the "Nimrod," three armed vessels, were sent from India, and these with the "Euphrates" were placed under the command of Lieutenant Lynch, who commanded the flotilla till it was broken up in 1842. The précis writer says: "During all this time the steamers carried the mails regularly to Bagdad, and on several occasions proceeded far beyond the city without meeting with any objections on the part of the Turkish authorities." P. 1 of "I.F.O.P."

1841. Writing on the 5th April, Colonel Taylor said: "I expect shortly to hear of the arrival of the 'Nimrod' and the 'Nitocris' at Hillah; the 'Assyria' will start for the Hai Canal, the Lower Euphrates, and the Karoon River as soon as the rise in the river permits." P. 48 of file of 1834.

The "Nitocris" and "Nimrod" ascended the Euphrates as far as Boles, which they reached on the 31st May, and here they remained until the 15th September. "History I.N.," vol. ii, pp. 45 and 47.

In the meantime the "Euphrates" and the "Assyria" explored the Karun, Dizful, Keekhah, Ilie, and Bameshir. It was proved at this time that steam communication between the Tigris and the Euphrates by way of Hai was practicable.

1842. Only one vessel remained in Turkish Arabia, and this was placed at the particular disposal of the Political Agent in Turkish Arabia. Government of Bombay, letter of November 12/4, 55 of file of 1843.

Journal of Commander Felix Jones.

1843. The "Nitocris" went above Bagdad.

Sir Henry Rawlinson's despatch dated February 7, to the Embassy, p. 1, file No. 255, Part I.

1844. The Pasha of Bagdad wanted to borrow the "Nitocris" to assist in coercing Arabs on the Euphrates. Speaking of the "Nitocris," the Resident said she was "a vessel which is retained, as far as I understand, at Bagdad for the sole purpose of preserving in active exercise the right which has been conceded to the British Government, by special permission of the Porte, of steam navigation on the rivers of Mesopotamia."

Rawlinson's despatch dated February 22 to Government of Bombay (p. 83, file No. 255, Part I).

1845. This document states that our friendly relations with the Arabs have done much to facilitate trade by the rivers, which was formerly quite insecure. It goes on to say: "The right of navigating the rivers of Mesopotamia with armed vessels, it may also be observed, was obtained with some difficulty by a special Firman from the Sultan, and so long as it continues in active exercise no attempt is likely to be made at its abrogation."

Report by Commander Felix Jones, dated April 17.

P. 3 of "I.F.O.P."

1846. The "Nitocris" ascended the Tigris above Bagdad as far as El Fatha, the place where the river forces its way through the Hamrin Hills. The vessel could not proceed, as the current was too strong. Commander Jones remarked on the great respect shown to the vessel by the Commanders of the various towns and by all classes.

Ibid.

1852. The "Nitocris" was replaced by the "Comet," which was at that time an old vessel.

1858. The "Comet" was particularly useful, as Arab feuds rendered the river traffic insecure.

P. 845, vol. xiii, Hertslet's Commercial Treaties.

1861. The Vizierial letter, dated the 15th January, 1861, refers primarily to merchant-vessels, but it is interesting as proving that it was then thought that Bagdad was on the Euphrates. The Vizierial letter begins: "The British Embassy having recently made certain communications for the purpose of obtaining a renewal of the orders which were sent concerning the British steamers and boats authorized by Her Majesty to ply on the Rivers Tigris and Euphrates . . . ." The Vizierial letter does not admit that any such orders were in fact given, but the preamble must have been based on some foundation.

Aitchison's Treaties and Sunad's, p. 3.

1864. In 1864 the Porte sanctioned provisionally the retention of the "Comet." The authority for the statement is not quoted.

P. 5 of "I.F.O.P."

1867. The "Comet" was in such a bad state that she could not be repaired.

P. 16, Aitchison's Treaties.

1869. On the 13th July a *note verbale* was sent to the Embassy stating: "La Sublime Porte consente au remplacement par un autre navire du bâtiment de la Marine Royale, la 'Comète,' se trouvant sur les rivières de Mésopotamie . . . ."

P. 139 of file No. 157, Part I.

1875. Note No. 17, dated the 31st March, from the Sublime Porte to the Embassy, says: "Pour ce qui est du bâtiment de la Marine Royale la 'Comète,' il continuera comme par le passé à rester sur les rivières de la Mésopotamie, suivant l'entente précédemment établie."

Report dated February 16 from Officer Commanding the "Comet," file No. 255, Part II).

1879. For some time it had only been possible to use the "Comet" with great care, and she had now become quite useless.

Memorandum from the Porte dated July 11 (file No. 255, Part III).

1884. The Porte agreed to the old "Comet" being replaced by the new "Comet." In this document it is stated that the "Comet" has two cannons. Whatever the old "Comet" may have had, the present "Comet" only has two machine guns, firing rifle ammunition.

The document states that the Imperial Government "vient de décider d'autoriser le nouveau bateau à entrer dans le fleuve et à aller stationner à Bagdad."

1885. The "Comet" ran aground at Washwash, a little above Tikrit, which is on the Tigris, far above Bagdad. The Turkish Ambassador protested, and Lord Salisbury wrote to the Ambassador (on the 11th June) that the Consul-General had gone for the sole purpose of visiting his Consular district. Lord Salisbury concluded his note to the

Turkish Ambassador with these words: "Her Majesty's Government hope that this explanation will be satisfactory to the Porte, and that no opposition will in future be made to the 'stationnaire' of the Consulate ascending the river for the same purpose, provided notice be previously given to the local authorities, a precaution which Her Majesty's Government regret was not taken in the present case."

1894. In 1894 the "Comet" was again taken to Samara, on this occasion with the knowledge of the Vali of Bagdad. Objections were again made in London. Rustem Pasha, in his letter to the Earl of Kimberley dated the 22nd May, 1894, stated that the journey to Samara was a serious irregularity. "Le Gouvernement Impérial n'ayant permis la présence d'un stationnaire devant le Consulat-Général d'Angleterre à Bagdad que par déférence pour le désir du Gouvernement Anglais." He concluded by asking that the Consul-General might be forbidden to "effectuer de pareils voyages" in future, for the Imperial Government could not give its assent.

In reply to this letter Lord Kimberley, on the 6th June, 1894, referred to Lord Salisbury's note of the 11th June, 1885, and expressed a hope that the Turkish Government would not consider it necessary to object to the Consul-General occasionally using the "stationnaire" for the purpose of visiting parts of his Consular district above Bagdad. He added: "The Turkish Government may be assured that in any such case the consent of the Turkish authorities will be first obtained, and that due care will be taken to avoid any proceeding which would give cause of offence." P. 60 file No 39.

Shortly after this the Turkish Embassy addressed Lord Kimberley, pointing out that Lord Salisbury's note of 1885 had not constituted an agreement, and asked that the Consul-General might be given instructions not to take the "Comet" above Bagdad on the Tigris, even if the local Turkish authorities raised no objection to such a course. Dated October 4, 1894 (file No. 39, p. 121).

On the 23rd October, 1894, the Embassy asked for Resident's opinion as to the importance of maintaining such a right, if it can be shown to have been at any time recognized or admitted by the Ottoman Government. File No. 39, p. 119.

(Signed) J. RAMSAY, *Major, Officiating Political Resident in Turkish Arabia, and Acting British Consul-General, Bagdad.*

Bagdad, October 16, 1907.

[39484] No. 117.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 2.)

(No. 715.)

Sir, *Pera, November* 26, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the accompanying copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Vice-Consul at Hodeidah reporting that a deputation of Arab Sheikhs and Ulemas, sent from the Hedjaz to Sana'a to endeavour to win back the rebellious Imam and the tribesmen, has returned without having effected anything, and that there are now rumours of an approaching mobilization of troops for service in the Yemen.

It will be difficult to send the intended reinforcements, but still more so to provide the necessary funds for a large military expedition.

You will recollect that in June last (see my telegram No. 74 of the 18th June) I advised the Sultan to accord a reasonable measure of local administrative power to the Imam and Sheikhs, and it was obvious that merely to concede to them the right of disposing of certain subordinate posts would be of no use in restoring tranquillity.

It would appear that things have turned out as I anticipated, and they seem likely to go on as badly as before, and possibly worse.

I have, &c
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 147.

Vice-Consul Richardson to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 34.)

Sir, *Hodeidah, October* 26, 1907.

THE Turkish transport "Mecca," whose arrival at Hodeidah was reported in my despatch No. 74 of the 23rd September last, sailed on the afternoon of the 13th instant for Akabah.

It is expected that the above vessel will be utilized in conveying reinforcements to the Yemen from the above port, where they will arrive from Syria and other places by the Hedjaz Railway viâ Ma'an. According to the local authorities, it would appear that each of the other Army Corps in Turkey will contribute one regiment of infantry for temporary service in this province.

It is to be inferred from this rumoured mobilization for the Yemen that the Turks either intend to make another attempt to crush the Imam, Syyed Yahya, as all peaceful missions to him have hitherto utterly failed, or that they anticipate an early general rising of the Arab population in the mountainous country that owe him allegiance.

The deputation of Arab Sheikhs and Ulemas from the Hedjaz that recently journeyed to Sana'a to exhort the Arab tribesmen to remain loyal to the Caliph returned here last Tuesday from the capital. They visited Marawar, Kutte, and one or two small villages on the journey to Sana'a, and afterwards took the usual caravan route, returning the same way. They did not interview the tribesmen *en route*.

Their stay at Sana'a extended just over a fortnight. On their arrival the Vali caused an assembly of the principal Sheikhs and townspeople and the high officials to meet the Sheikhs at the Secretariat, where three of the deputation, viz., Sheikh Saleh Kamal and Sheikh Abdulla-bin-Saddiq', past and present Muftis respectively at Mecca of the Hanifi sect, and Sheikh El-Ulema, Sheikh Mahomed Babuseil, the Mufti of the Shafia sect, delivered addresses. They admonished the tribesmen for their past rebellious conduct, and enjoined them to remain faithful to their Sultan and Caliph. They deprecated the attitude assumed by the Imam, and described such as being contrary to the dictates of the prophet.

The assembly with one accord exclaimed, in reply, that they were loyal to the Padshah. Prayers were afterwards offered outside of the Government offices for the long life of His Majesty the Sultan, and the gathering dispersed.

The mission next addressed a letter to the Imam Syyed Yahya at Khamir warning him against his rebellious and defiant behaviour towards the Ottoman Government during the past two or three years. They further informed him that if he tendered his submission, the Sultan was prepared to grant him rank and an allowance monthly, and to accord him a status similar to that of the Grand Shereef of Mecca.

The Hedjaz deputation of Sheikhs and Ulemas further requested him (the Imam) to release all Arab hostages and Turkish prisoners held by him for some time past in his stronghold at Shahara. They also earnestly advised him to desist from his illegal attitude in demanding tithes and "vergo" from the tribesmen in the mountainous districts, as they had already to pay such to the Ottoman Government.

The Imam, in reply, stated that he was not a rebel, but, on the contrary, that he was loyal to the Sultan. The local Turkish officials, he added, owing to their abuse of authority and oppression of the poorer agricultural classes, were responsible for his action in waging war and for the bloodshed that had resulted therefrom. He (Syyed Yahya) demanded abrogation of the "Tanzeem" (Turkish civil law) and the substitution of the laws of Islam ("Cheriat").

A second letter was then sent to Syyed Yahya by the deputation again warning him that severe chastisement awaited him unless he submitted in good time, and rebuking him for having subscribed himself as "Commander of the Faithful" in the communication received by them from him.

When these Sheikhs and Ulemas left the capital, no answer had been received from the Imam.

A "muzbatta" to the Sultan, signed by all the members of the Hedjaz deputation to the Yemen, after setting forth the correspondence that had passed between themselves and the Imam, Syyed Yahya, proceeds to recommend as the only alternative the resort to force for the complete subjugation of the latter, and for the establishment of permanent peace in this province.

The members of the mission, on being interviewed at Hodeidah, stated that the tribesmen inhabiting the mountainous districts and the population at Sana'a were decidedly partisans of the Imam and hostile to the Turks, in spite of their professions to the contrary. They were daily visited by spies and emissaries of the Imam at the capital, who kept him informed of their proceedings. They (the Sheikhs) could not but observe with regret that, although the townspeople crowded them with visits daily, when they were unfortunate enough to lose one of their most distinguished members, the Sheikh Abdullah-bin-Saddiq', the Haniña Mufti, who died from malarial fever, not a single Arab came to offer them condolences or to render assistance at his funeral.

On the whole, the Sheikhs expressed dissatisfaction and disappointment at the results of their mission to the Yemenites, which they openly admitted had proved utterly futile.

The deputation will sail for Jeddah *en route* to Mecca by the Khedivial steamer on the 31st instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. A. RICHARDSON.

[39485] No. 148.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 2.)

(No. 716.)

Sir, *Constantinople, November* 26, 1907.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 200 of the 28th May, and my reply No. 629 of the 8th September, 1906, respecting Mr. Yacoub Essaya's alleged Concession to run a line of steamers on the Tigris and Euphrates, which formed the subject of inquiries made by Mr. R. Balfour, M.P., I have the honour to transmit herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad reporting on the practicability of steam navigation on the Euphrates for commercial purposes. Major Ramsay observes in conclusion that, under existing circumstances, owing to the present obstruction of the Hindieh barrage, and the absence of a navigable canal from Suklawiya to Bagdad, and the condition of the river itself, it is very doubtful whether such navigation would prove a commercial success.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 148.

Acting Consul-General Ramsay to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 117.)

Sir, *Bagdad, October* 19, 1907.

IN your Excellency's despatch of the 13th June, 1906, I was asked to report my opinion as to whether the Euphrates could be navigated by steam-vessels, with the hope of the venture proving a commercial success, I have not been able to obtain the information that I have sought on this subject, but from what I have been able to learn I am inclined to think that there is no chance of making a commercial success of steam navigation on the Lower Euphrates. The Hindiya dam may be taken as dividing the Upper from the Lower Euphrates, for no steamer can pass that dam until such time as a suitable lock is provided. Plans for such a lock have been submitted to Constantinople, but it seems likely to be some time before they are carried out. Along the Lower Euphrates, as defined above, there are no large towns, except Nedjef, and there are no distributing centres. The country on the left bank of the Euphrates can be served from the Tigris with the help of the Hai Canal, and on the right bank of the Euphrates there is, I understand, only a fringe of cultivated land before the desert begins. The central portion of Arabia can more conveniently be supplied with imported articles through Koweit or from the Red Sea than from any place on the Euphrates. Further, the Lamlun marshes, not far above Gurna, offer a serious impediment to navigation. I hope later on to submit a more precise Report.

2. As regards the prospects of successful navigation of the Upper Euphrates, there is very little recent experience on which to form an opinion. Colonel Chesney's two steamers were put together near Birejik, and descended the Euphrates in 1836 or 1837. In 1838 the steamer "Euphrates" went up the river of the same name from

Bussorah as far as Hit, and in 1841 the two steamers "Nimrod" and "Nitocris" went up the Euphrates as far as Beles (Meskench).

In 1872 Lieutenant Powell, the officer commanding the "Comet," went with the late Midhat Pasha in the Turkish steamer "Fratt" from Suklawiya near to Felluja, up to Meskeneh. Lieutenant Powell kept a detailed record of the voyage, and this, together with a tracing of the river, was published by the Government of India in 1873. The number of the publication is 105, and it is entitled "Selections from the Records of the Government of India, Foreign Department: Voyage on the Euphrates, Suklawiya to Meskeneh." Lieutenant Powell's conclusion was "that should everything be done that ought to be, and with vessels suitable to the work, the navigation of this fine river is practicable."

The next report on the Upper Euphrates that I have been able to find is that written by Mr. Dobbs of the Indian Civil Service, who made the journey from Birejik to Falluja in January 1903. A copy of this is inclosed for your Excellency's information. Two officers of the Egyptian Educational Service, Messrs. Young and Frost, came down the Euphrates in the middle of the summer of 1906, and on their arrival at Bagdad I showed them Mr. Dobbs' Report, and asked them to make remarks on it. They generally agreed with what Mr. Dobbs had said.

3. The conclusion to be drawn from a study of the correspondence is I think that the Upper Euphrates is at certain seasons navigable, but that it is at present very doubtful whether such navigation would be a commercial success. The condition of the river, as it seems to exist at present, is so bad that a steamer locked up on it could not, in my opinion, be made to pay. It might, however, be profitable to employ a steamer on the Upper Euphrates occasionally, if it could be employed elsewhere when desired. This will only be possible when a navigable canal has been constructed between the Euphrates and Tigris, and on this important subject I am addressing your Excellency in a separate despatch.

4. I may mention that I have sent to His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Aleppo three copies of Mr. Dobbs' Report and three tracings of Lieutenant Powell's map, with a request that he will, as opportunity offers, give them to intelligent British travellers, so that our information may as far as possible be checked and brought up to date.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. RAMSAY, *Major, Officiating Political Resident in Turkish Arabia, and Acting British Consul-General, Bagdad.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 148.

Report on the Navigation of the Euphrates from the Town of Birejik, in the Vilayet of Aleppo, to Felúja, in the Vilayet of Bagdad.

I PROPOSE to divide this Report into three parts, as follows:—

I. A short sketch of previous inquiries into the navigation of the Euphrates to the north of the latitude of Bagdad, and of practical attempts to navigate the river.

II. Detailed notes on the present state of the river-bed, especially at the most difficult points, taken by me in the course of a voyage in a country boat from Birejik to Felúja, between the 16th January and the 8th February, 1903.

III. Information regarding the trade and general conditions of the country between Birejik and Felúja, and the possibilities of future development.

I.—*Previous Inquiries into the Possibility of Navigating the Euphrates and Attempts at its Navigation.*

The earliest inquiry into the navigation of the Euphrates in modern times was that made by Colonel Chesney in 1835–7, and by Captain Lynch (his senior officer in his first expedition) in 1837 and the following years. The history of this inquiry is so well known that any detailed reference to it would be superfluous. It may, however, be briefly stated that in the year 1834 Chesney left Damascus on the 10th December and reached the right bank of the Euphrates at El Kaim, about 40 miles above Ana, on the 25th December. He then rode along the bank of the river as far as Ana, built a raft there,

and began the descent of the river by raft on the 2nd January, 1835. He arrived at Hit on the 9th January, took one of the country boats there, and reached Felúja three days later. On his second expedition, in the year 1836, Chesney conveyed two steamers in pieces across country from a point near Alexandretta to Birejik on the Euphrates, launched them at Birejik, and steamed down the whole length of the River Euphrates to Bussorah, losing one of his steamers, however, near El Kaim in a gale.

General Chesney's remaining steamer did not reascend the Euphrates, and was transferred by order of the British Government to the Indus. After General Chesney's expedition, no regular attempt seems to have been made to navigate the Euphrates by steam until the year 1870, when the Governor-General of Bagdad, after having carried out works of considerable magnitude at Ana and Hadisa, with a view to making the difficult rapids at these two points navigable, started a service of two small steamers, which plied for a distance of about 440 miles between Felúja (the landing place whence goods go by caravan to Bagdad, 38 miles distant) to Meskeneh (the landing place whence goods go by caravan to Aleppo, 50 miles distant). They occasionally also descended the river as far as Hillah. I have been unable to obtain any accurate information regarding the fate of these schemes. It is certain that after a year or two the service was discontinued, and I was informed by the inhabitants of Ana that the final blow was dealt by the complete wreck of one of the steamers on the rocks just below the Island of Ardeshir. Whether the steamers were able to secure any large amount of traffic I could not discover; but I gathered that they were mainly employed in conveying troops and Government officials. The experiment seemed at one time to hold out promises of success, for it is said that on one voyage one of the steamers performed the whole journey from Meskeneh to Felúja, a distance of 440 miles, in four days.

Since the failure of the experiment of 1870, no steamers have plied on the portion of the Euphrates in question; but it was stated by Mr. Cuinet in 1894 (*vide* "La Turquie d'Asie," Tome 7e [?], p. 84) that, under the orders of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, some engineers had been recently directed to study the question of the navigation of the Euphrates, and to draw up plans of the work necessary to make the river navigable. The Report is said to have been duly submitted, and to have been to the effect that the Euphrates could be made perfectly navigable by an expenditure of £T. 62,000. Mr. Cuinet further states that the Turkish Government decided that the cost of the proposed works should form a charge on the revenues of the Imperial domains in the Vilayets of Aleppo, Mosul, and Bagdad. Nine years have passed since this statement was penned by Mr. Cuinet, and the project seems to have made no progress. The natives along the course of the Euphrates and the native boatmen had never heard of any such inquiry, and nothing is known of it either in the office of the British Consulate-General at Bagdad, or in that of Messrs. S. Lynch & Co. at the same place.

II.—*Notes on the present State of the River-bed between Birejik and Felúja.*

1. I left Birejik on the 16th January, 1903, when the volume of water in the Euphrates was considerably swollen by unusually heavy winter rains. It is said that, as a rule, the water is highest in the spring months, after the melting of the snow in the mountains, and low both in winter and in the latter part of summer and autumn. The effect of the abnormal rains was observable until I reached Deir El Zor on the 24th January. Thereafter the river sank rapidly owing to severe frosts, and was said to be even below its ordinary winter level. It must be borne in mind, therefore, that the details given below represent the state of the river between Birejik and Deir El Zor, when the water was more in volume than is usually the case in winter, and less than in spring. Between Deir El Zor and Felúja the details given represent the normal state of the river during the winter months.

2. The latest and best map of the Euphrates valley is that published by Dr. Richard Kiepert in 1890, to illustrate the journey made by Dr. Max Freiherr von Oppenheim from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf in the year 1893, and sold with Dr. von Oppenheim's book on the subject. In this map many names of places are inaccurately written, and many important villages are altogether omitted. When the places to which I refer are entered on Dr. Kiepert's map I shall give no details as to their position. In the cases in which the places referred to are not entered on the map, details as to their position will be given. The map published with Colonel Chesney's Report on the Euphrates and Tigris expedition will also be referred to.

3. Between Birejik and Alif-Orlu the average depth of the water is 12 feet, the

pace of the current 3 miles per hour, and the average width of the river about 200 yards. Three-quarters of a mile below Alif-Orlu is an island (unnamed) about 1 mile in length; the navigable channel goes to the right. Half a mile further down is another small island (unnamed); the navigable channel goes to the left. Here the stream increases in pace to about 4½ miles an hour, and continues at that pace until past Gerabis (correct pronunciation Yerablis). Chesney remarks on a "whirlpool of Gourlou" shortly above Gerabis, but this has ceased to exist; and the stream as far as this point seems now to present no difficulties to careful navigation, and the depth was in no places where I sounded less than 6 feet. Half a mile below the ruins of Yerablis the pace of the current increases to about 6 miles an hour, and there is a somewhat dangerous rapid lasting for about 500 yards. The navigable channel is only about 25 yards broad, but in this channel the depth of the water is ample, being about 12 feet. At the head of the rapid the channel keeps in mid-stream. After 350 yards it runs close in under the high left-hand bank, and continues on this course until the rapids end 150 yards further down. We passed some boats full of grain stuck in the rapids about half way down, having kept too much to the left; and our boatmen said that numbers of boats were lost here every year. One mile and a-half lower down, opposite Yerablis, Zir, a village on the right bank, there is another rapid stretch extending over a distance of about 3 miles, the current being about 4½ miles an hour. This rapid, however, contains no shallows. About 6 miles below Yerablis we passed the island down as Jazira Ahmad, the navigable channel going to the right. About 4 miles lower down is the Island of Coiraz, the navigable channel, 105 yards broad, going to the left. The pace of the current, which had been only about 3 miles an hour, here increased to about 5 miles an hour, the average depth of the water being 9 feet. At the south end of Boiraz the stream spreads into several small channels, the navigable one goes to the left and is not more than 50 yards broad. Three miles lower down (about 3 miles above Kizil Hujuk) is the Island of Kirk Mughár, the navigable channel going to the left. About a mile below Hammam there is a short piece of rapid, the current about 6 miles an hour, but no shallows, the depth being about 6 feet; and a short way below this is the whirlpool of Chaulik, which is said to offer some difficulties in heavy floods. From this point to a point about 3 miles below Kelâten-Nejim the width of the river is about 150 yards, the current about 3 miles an hour, and the average depth 6 feet. At the latter point the stream broadens out over a wide, gravelly bed, the width of which is about half a-mile, and this broad stretch continues for about 6 miles, the navigable channel, about 6 feet deep, being close to the right bank. Thereafter, until opposite the shrine of Sheikh El Arúd (a distance of about 25 miles), the river resumes its ordinary breadth of about 250 yards, the current being about 3 miles an hour. A short way below Sheikh El Arúd is the Island of Mughárab al Baghl, about 7 miles long. The navigable stream goes to the left, and the current increases to about 4¾ miles an hour. Two miles below the northern end of this island is a second smaller island, and the navigable channel passes between the two. The width of the channel past the islands is about 100 yards. From these islands to near the place shown as Surje or El Hammam on Dr. Kiepert's map, a distance of about 80 miles, the average width is about 250 yards, the current 3 miles an hour, and the depth 8 feet. Navigation over this stretch presents no difficulties, and the following details, which deal with the river between the Island of Mughárab El Baghl and El Hammam, are only given in order to indicate the course of the navigable channel past the various islands. Three miles above Meskench is the Jazirat El Mullah, the navigable stream going to the right. Opposite Meskench again is an island, the navigable channel going to the left. Below this point there is no island until a point opposite Abu Hareira, where there is an island of the same name, the navigable channel going to the left. Next comes an unnamed island 12 miles below Kelât El Jabar, the navigable channel going to the left. Again, opposite some ruins a few hundred yards below Hammam, there are two islands, the navigable channel being in the centre between the two. The stretch of river from Hammam to a short way below Rakka is the most difficult for navigation of the whole portion of the river to the north of Ana. Immediately below the Island of Hammam the current increases to about 6 miles an hour, and spits of gravel show up over most of the river-bed. The navigable channel winds considerably among these spits of gravel, and is never less than 6 feet in depth, but great care has to be taken to keep within it. In the summer a great many boats stick at this point, and I was told that last year in Ramazan eleven pairs of boats were upset there. This stretch of bad rapids continues for about 3½ miles below Hammam. Thereafter there is no difficulty for about 9 miles, when a very bad piece of rapids occurs at the place which was called Funsa by Chesney, but which now bears the name of Abu Juben, the rapids being made more dangerous by the

ruins of a bridge referred to by Chesney, which stood up in the middle of the stream. From Abu Jubea to Rakka there is no rapid, but the depth of water varies continually from 4 feet to 12 feet, so that great care would be necessary in its navigation in low water. About 5 miles below Rakka there is a very swift rapid called Muhammad Agha, which was only formed ten years ago, the current going about 7 miles an hour. The rapid is about 300 yards long. At the top the navigable channel is 100 feet from the left bank, and towards the end of the rapid it goes close in under the left bank. About a mile below this, opposite Hamra (written by Chesney Amran), there is another short and violent rapid, the channel going close to the left bank. From Hamra to the new station of Sabka (above 10 miles) there is no difficulty, the stream being about 200 yards wide, the current 2½ miles an hour, and the depth averaging 8 feet. About 4 miles below Sabka there is a short swift rapid lasting for about 400 yards, the width of the stream being only about 100 yards. Five miles further on, at a place called Zor Shammár, are shallows and spits of sand, the navigable channel being tortuous. About 2 miles below this is the Island of Albu Hamad, 4 miles long, the navigable channel going to the right. About 3 miles below this island is a difficult stretch of shallows and spits of gravel. The channel goes quite close to the right bank. Two miles lower down the river is divided up by numerous small islands, the navigable channel being close to the left bank. From this point on to the pass where the Euphrates forces its way through the Halebi Jelebi range, the current is not more than 2 miles an hour, the river is about 200 yards broad, and the average depth does not exceed 4 feet. At the pass of Halebi Jelebi the river contracts to a breadth of only about 70 yards. The depth throughout the pass is about 7 feet, and the current above 4 miles an hour.

4. On the right side of the stream at the head of the pass is a strong back-water and whirlpool, which is said to be dangerous when there is much water in the river. Half way down the pass is a short island, the navigable channel going to the left. From the point where the river issues from this pass to Deir El Zor, the river is of an almost unvarying breadth of about 250 yards, the average depth is 5 feet, and the current about 2½ miles an hour. Two miles below the pass is a ruined pier of a bridge in mid-stream and an island, the channel going to the right. After Deir El Zor the river widens to 400 yards. Five miles below Zor is a large island, the channel going to the left. From this point to the mouth of the Khabur River, near Abuseira, the width of the stream varies from 300 to 350 yards, the rate of the current is about 3½ miles an hour, and the average depth 6 feet. The mouth of the Khabur River is only about 50 yards wide.

5. Below it the Euphrates divides for about 2 miles into several channels and small islands. At about 1 mile above Meyadin there are some shallow rapids, the depth being only 4 feet. From Meyadin to Salchiye the width of the stream is about 200 yards, the current about 4 miles an hour, and the average depth 8 feet. One mile below the ruined fort of Salchiye is a shallow with numerous spits of sand showing above the water, and there is another shallow half a-mile below Salchiye Khan, the depth of the water in the narrow navigable channel being 5 feet. Eight miles below Salchiye is an island, the channel going to the right. Two miles below this island is a very shallow place with snags of wood showing up all over the river, and a pair of country boats recently wrecked in mid-stream. Again, at a point about 18 miles below Salchiye Khan, there is a stiff, short rapid (this point cannot be specified more accurately, as there are no villages or encampments in the neighbourhood). I could hear nothing of the rocks of Iskerya, which, according to Chesney's map, should be about 25 miles below Salchiye Ruin; and it is probable that changes in the river-bed have obliterated this ledge. About 4 miles above Abu'l Kemál are some stiff rapids, where the river divides into three channels, the navigable channel to the extreme right. Opposite Abu'l Kemál is a large island, with the navigable channel to the right. After Abu'l Kemál the river narrows to a width of about 150 yards, the current slows down to about 2 miles an hour, and the average depth is 12 feet.

6. These conditions continue until El Kaim is reached. At El Kaim the bed of the river, which from Birejik down to this point consists of soft mud or gravel, becomes rocky; and navigation is considered more difficult. Opposite the new Turkish Fort of El Kaim are two ruined piers of an old bridge in mid-stream, not mentioned by Chesney; 5 miles below El Kaim is a large island, the channel going to the right; 1½ miles below this is another island, the channel again going to the right; and 1 mile further down a third island, the channel going to the right, with a sunken rock at the lower end of the channel, marked on Chesney's map as Simanah Rock. Four miles below this is a rock standing up in mid-stream, shown by Chesney as El Muthadiyah Rock. Immediately below this rock is the first of the long series of water-wheels or

"náúrs," which stretches from this point to Hit. These water-wheels, which are shown on Chesney's map as "mills," are attached to aqueducts, to the level of which they raise, and into which they discharge water for purposes of irrigation. They are fully described on pp. 655 and 656 of Vol. II of Chesney's "Expedition to the Euphrates and Tigris." He does not, however, comment on the dams of sunken rock, which are the invariable concomitants of a "náúr," and which in low water render navigation extremely dangerous, and require unceasing vigilance. The only reference to these dams is contained in Lieutenant Cleaviand's letter published as Appendix I to Vol. XI of Chesney's "Expedition," in which he states that "The bunds and irrigating walls . . . did not cause our vessel the slightest impediment in her descent." It seems probable that these dams presented no difficulty to Chesney's steamer, owing to the fact that his expedition took place at a time of year (March, April, May, and June) when the water is highest. It is, however, possible that many of these rough dams have been constructed in recent years; and some Arabs told me that this was the case, while others denied it. The view that the dams are of recent construction is supported by the fact that Chesney's Report seems to indicate that the aqueducts in his time were more often than not in ruins. There are, however, at present very few which are not in repair, there having been a considerable revival of cultivation since Chesney's time; and it is natural to conclude that when the natives took to using them again they put down dams to force the water to flow beneath the water-wheels. However this may be, it is a fact that at present there is about every water-wheel an artificial rapid, caused by banks of stones beneath the water usually built out at an acute angle from the water-wheel and inclined upstream, so as to catch and raise the water for the purpose of the water-wheel. In some cases these dams stretch across the whole stream, and almost every one is a source of anxiety to the native boatmen when the water is low. It would be useless to enumerate all these rapids, which are patent to the eye, and which occur continually between El Kaim and Hit at intervals sometimes of not more than 300 yards. The most dangerous places only will therefore be mentioned; but it must be borne in mind that the whole of this stretch of the river, a distance of 90 miles, is rendered difficult in low water by these dams.

7. The description of the river course below the rock of El Muthadiyah may now be resumed. From the rock to a point about 12 miles above Ana the width of the river is only about 150 yards, the current, except at the dams of the "náúrs," is only about 2 miles an hour, and the average depth, except at the "náúrs," is 9 feet. Opposite Kalát Rášida is a small island, the channel going to the left. At the southern extremity of the loop opposite Kelat Balak is a large island, the channel going to the left. Past the Island of Zaferániya the channel goes to the left; past Jadírah Island the channel goes to the left. About 2 miles above the new station of Nahíye is a large island, the channel going to the right. Just above Nahíye there is rather a bad rapid, and opposite the station an island, the channel going to the right. Four miles below Nahíye is a very bad rapid, with a water-wheel on the right. The channel goes near the left bank. There were three wrecked boats of Birejik full of firewood in the middle of the rapids, which shows that they are dangerous. At the foot of the westerly side of the big loop before Ana the stream broadens to 250 yards, and continues broad as far as Ana. At the head of the loop just above En Nutára is a dangerous rapid formed by the dam of a ruined "náúr." The next dangerous point is at the Island of Karabla, 1 mile above Ana. Chesney wrote that the ledge of Karabla was considered the greatest difficulty for boats throughout the navigation of the Euphrates from Birejik to Bussorah, and this statement still holds good. Above the Island of Karabla the river broadens to about 300 yards, and contracts to 200 yards at the head of the island. At a point about 30 yards about the head of the island a straight ledge of rock stretches across the whole stream, higher to the right, where it forms a regular waterfall, and lower to the left, where there is merely a very swift rapid. The rate of the current over the ledge and all the way past the Island of Karabla was, when I saw it, about 7 miles an hour. The channel goes to the left of the island, about 20 yards from the left shore of the island. At the lower end of Karabla Island a second ledge of formidable rocks called Sukkur Sultan bar the whole breadth of the right-hand channel. The whole of this bad piece of rapids past Karabla is known to the boatmen as Bahúla; and the course taken by my boat is shown in the accompanying sketch.

8. Chesney, in his book, makes the unaccountable mistake of saying that Ráva stands above the fall, whereas it is at least half a-mile below it. The depth of water in the narrow channel seemed to be plentiful, though the boat went too fast to make soundings possible. I was told that the present channel is that excavated for the Turkish steamers which went up to Meskeneh in 1870. This artificial channel stretches

from the ledge of Karabla all the way past Ana to below the Island of Ardeshir (called by Chesney Lubbard Island). The town of Ana, consisting of a waterside street 4 miles long, commences only half a-mile below Karabla Island, and the current runs at the pace of 7 miles an hour past the whole length of the town. A chain of inhabited islands, every one of which now bears a different name to that assigned to it by Chesney, stretches in front of the town; and the channel goes to the left of these islands until the Island of Ardeshir is reached, when it turns to the right and passes between the ruined piers of Ardeshir's bridge, close to the spot where one of the Turkish steamers was wrecked. From this point to the Island of Tiblis the current continues swift, about 5½ miles an hour, and a short way above Tiblis is the dangerous ledge of Bishkira (called by Chesney El Banni), which is said to have given great trouble to the Turkish steamer before it was deepened. The artificial channel goes about 40 yards from the right shore. Below Tiblis the current slows down to a rate of not more than 2 miles an hour, except at the few "náúrs," and there is no difficulty until the village of Habben Gharbi (shown on Kiepert's and Chesney's maps as Sheibiga) is reached. Here there are some rocks showing up in mid-stream. The channel goes close to the right shore. From this point the rate of the current increases to 4 miles an hour. The large Island of Sariyáñi is 6 miles below Habben Gharbi, the channel going to the left. At Askar Island the channel goes to the left. Chesney appears to have erroneously shown an island 10 miles below this point as Askar Island, and this mistake has been repeated in Kiepert's map. The island and village which now bear that name are to the west instead of the east of Muhárah. Here the current slows down to the rate of 2 miles an hour, and the average depth is 5 feet. Past the Island of Muhárah the channel goes to the right. Opposite the village of Muhárah there is a very difficult rapid caused by the dam of "náúr," the only safe and very narrow channel being close under the "náúr" on the left, with a big fall in the water. Past the Island of Deir the channel goes to the right. About 2 miles below Deir are the islands and village of Zibda, the position of which seems to have been erroneously shown by Chesney as about 7 miles further down the stream. The islands now known as those of Zibda appear to have been shown by him as Tafaliah and Nasariyah. The channel goes to the left. Three miles below is the chain of islands known as Khawájí-el-Susa, past which the channel goes to the left. About half-a-mile above Sanáníya is the difficult ledge of Bárij, with only one narrow passage in the middle of the stream, and the Island of Bárij, past which the channel goes to the left. Past the island city of Hadísa the channel goes to the left. Half-way down this channel are the ruined piers of a bridge very difficult to pass, with one narrow passage quite close under a flour-mill on the left shore of the island. Again at the southern end of the Island of Hadisa is a difficult ledge of rocks, having a narrow passage close under the left shore of the island. At this point the rate of the current increases suddenly to about 7 miles an hour, and this rate is maintained until about 7 miles below El Uz. The dams of "náúrs" are very troublesome for a short way below Hadísa. Immediately below the island begins the second of the artificial channels constructed by the Turkish Government in 1870 for its steamers, and this channel continues for a distance of 12 miles until past the formidable rocks of Fat Hat Hudur Elias, hugging the right-hand shore at a distance varying from 20 to 10 yards. The dangerous ledge of Fat Hat Hudur Elias stretches across the river about 400 yards above the Island of Haji. Chesney is unaccountably confused in his description of this ledge. He states that he first passed Haji Island and then floated over the rocks of Fat Hat Hudur Elias, and then passed El Uz. On the other hand, his map shows the Rock of Haji Hudur Elias as 5 miles below El Uz; so that both his verbal description and his map are wrong. How dangerous is this ledge may be judged from the fact that every master of a boat passing it vows to sacrifice a sheep to the Prophet Elias if he gets safe through it; and I was obliged to conform to the custom. This ledge runs obliquely from north to south across the whole breadth of the river. Just above it is a low rectangular dam, built out by Turkish engineers from the left shore, so as to force the water on to the right-hand half of the ledge and deepen the water there. The breadth of the stream here is about 500 yards. About 300 yards above this artificial dam the channel leaves the right shore and crosses diagonally to the centre of the stream, in order to hit the narrow passage of deep water over the ledge, which is quite close up to the artificial dam. Through this narrow passage the water rushes at the pace of about 12 miles an hour, with a fall of about 5 feet in 20 yards.

It would be evidently impossible for a river-steamer to make head against this rush under low-water conditions without being towed; and there would be great difficulty in towing, seeing that the passage is in mid-stream. In high water the ledge is better covered, and is said not to be excessively difficult. Immediately after the passage of

Fat Hat Hudur Elias the channel crosses diagonally too close to the left shore in order to avoid another ledge of rocks sticking out from the right shore immediately above Haji Island. The channel continues to hug the left shore past Haji Island and El Uz Island, 400 yards below it, and as far as a point 7 miles below El Uz, the rate of the current throughout this distance being not less than 7 miles an hour. The accompanying sketch shows the course taken by the artificial channel from above Fat Hat Hudur Elias to below El Uz. At the point, 7 miles below El Uz, where the channel leaves the left shore, the current is slow for 2 miles, after which there is a bad rapid by a "náúr." Shortly after this last point is the ruin of a bridge-pier standing up in mid-stream. A mile above the mouth of the Wady Houran is a second big bit of ruin in mid-stream, and shortly below this the Island of Mangár, the channel going to the right. The Wady Houran was dry when we passed it, but it is said to discharge its waters with terrific force after a flood. Past the island town of Jibba the channel goes to the right. Just above the island are the remains of a ruined bridge, the current increases in pace, and the only passage is on the extreme right hand, near the right-hand pier. For about 5 miles below Jibba the current is 4 miles an hour; thereafter it slows down to 2 miles an hour. The channel passes the Island of Gharráf on the left. Opposite the small village of El Ellia, at the northernmost extremity of the loop of the river above Gharráf, is a bad piece of rapids between two "náúrs," with a rock in the middle. Past the large Island of Flewi, opposite Sáleyi, the channel goes to the right. From this point to Hit the stream becomes rapid, the pace being about 6 miles an hour, but the river presents no difficulties. From Hit to Felája the river is very broad, varying in width from 500 to 300 yards; the current is about 2 miles an hour, and the depth averages 12 feet. The two shallow fords of Abu Sisa and Rusheab (Abu Shahab), mentioned by Chesney, have ceased to exist.

III.—*Information regarding the Trade and General Conditions of the Country, and Possibilities of future development.*

1. Under this head I shall discuss, first, the river-borne trade actually existing between Birejik and Felája, and, secondly, the possibility of a line of river-steamers securing a share of the carrying trade now conducted by caravan or by steamers through the Suez Canal between Bagdad and Aleppo.

2. *Description of Birejik Boats.*—Between Birejik and Hit merchandize is carried solely by the flat-bottomed boats known as "shakhtúrs," built at Birejik and nowhere else. These boats, which are now so common, do not seem to have existed in Chesney's time, for he makes no mention of them in his exhaustive chapter on "Boats and Hydraulic Works of the East" (chap. xx, vol. ii). The ferry-boats of Birejik are, on the contrary, carefully described by him, and it may therefore be assumed that the carrying-boats of Birejik did not exist in his time. These boats are oblong in shape, 18 feet long, 8 feet wide, and with a depth, from the gunwale to the flooring, of 2½ feet, which gives a carrying capacity of 300 cubic feet. When fully loaded they draw about 1½ feet. The total depth of these boats, from the gunwale to the bottom, is 3 ft. 8 in., the bottom consisting of trunks of trees sawn in half, beneath which flat boards are nailed, and a flooring of flat boards is fastened 1 foot above the bottom. The sides and ends of the boats also consist of flat boards roughly nailed together, the interstices being stuffed with rags, over which bitumen is daubed. The cost of building a boat of this kind is said to be about £ T. 4½. One boat carries about 100 cantars of Constantinople, or a little over 5 tons. These boats of Birejik nearly always travel in pairs, fastened together side by side. They are steered by clumsy sweeps, pulled in the bow, and they are so unmanageable that they can only travel in a flat calm. This liability to be arrested by the slightest wind is the chief drawback of these boats. They can, of course, only take merchandize down stream, and they are usually broken up and sold for the price of the wood of which they are built at the place to which the goods carried in them are consigned. A certain number, however, are towed empty upstream by the amphibious inhabitants of Ana. The time taken by boats to descend the river varies enormously. They have been known to go from Birejik to Felája in time of high water in twelve days. On the other hand, they frequently take as much as sixty days when delayed by wind or when the water is low.

3. *Through Trade by Boat between Aleppo and Bagdad.*—The through trade between Aleppo and Bagdad consists mainly of Aleppo soap and cottons. The soap goes by boat from Birejik to Felája, where it is transferred to the backs of mules for Bagdad; while the cottons go by mule-caravan, which takes twenty-four days to cover the distance

between Aleppo and Bagdad. The total annual weight of this traffic does not exceed 100 tons, of which not more than 30 tons go by boat. The reasons why goods from Aleppo are embarked at Birejik, which is 70 miles further up the Euphrates than Meskench, the nearest point on the river to Aleppo, is that there are no suitable arrangements at the small village of Meskench for the embarkation of goods.

4. *Local Traffic by Boat.*—Local traffic on the Euphrates may be divided into two portions, viz., traffic between Birejik and Deir El Zor, and traffic below Deir El Zor.

5. *Traffic between Birejik and Deir.*—The resources and population of the country on the banks of the Euphrates between Birejik and Deir El Zor may be described in a few words. The town of Birejik itself contains about 10,000 inhabitants, and is the principal trade centre in this part of the country for cereals, butter, olive-oil, and grapes. From Birejik to the neighbourhood of Karakol, a distance of about 84 miles, a fertile belt of land, producing, without irrigation, wheat and barley, and containing scattered mud villages, stretches on both sides of the Euphrates. It varies in width from 1 to 3 miles, being bounded on each side by low chalk or gypsum hills, which now approach and now recede from the river. At Karakol cultivation ceases, the ground between the chalk hills and the river being covered with a dense growth of tamarisk, brambles, and liquorice, in the midst of which are a few Arab tents. These conditions obtain down to the tract of land inhabited by the Sabka tribe, a distance of about 70 miles, the only populous or cultivated spot in the whole of this tract being in the immediate neighbourhood of the small town of Rakka, which contains about 1,500 inhabitants. From Sabka to Deir El Zor the Arab encampments are more frequent, and cultivation is carried on intermittently along the banks, the land being irrigated to a distance of about a quarter of a mile from the river by "girds" (water-skins raised by bullocks). No grain whatever is available for export from this latter tract. From Birejik about 500 pairs of boats laden with grain are said to go every year to Deir El Zor, chiefly in the spring months. This traffic amounts to about 100,000 cantars, or about 5,500 tons. In July and August, butter, vegetables, fresh grapes, and honey go by boat from Birejik to Deir El Zor, and in the autumn go considerable quantities of raisins. Traffic in these latter articles, however, is said to be decreasing as cultivation round Deir El Zor is spreading. This traffic does not, probably, exceed 60 tons a-year. In addition to the export of grain from Birejik, there is a large export by boat of wheat and barley from a tract called Najib on the left bank, opposite the mountains of Sandáliya, and from a tract on the right bank in the neighbourhood of Shaikh Arúd. This amounts to about 1,600 tons a-year. There is also a small trade in onions and spices with the tribes on the banks. The total approximate annual river-borne traffic between Birejik and Deir El Zor may be summarized as follows:—

	Tons.
From Birejik to Deir—	
Grain	5,500
Vegetables, raisins, &c.	60
From Najib and Shaikh Arúd to Deir (with tribes on bank)—	
Grain	1,600
Miscellaneous	10
Total	7,170

In addition to the above, a very large amount of brushwood (chiefly tamarisk) is made into rafts and floated down to Deir El Zor from the neighbourhood of Abu Harcira.

6. *Traffic below Dir.*—The town of Deir El Zor is said to contain at present about 22,000 inhabitants, and it is yearly increasing in size and importance. From Deir to Abu'l Kemál, a distance of about 70 miles, there is almost continuous cultivation by means of water-lifts; but the cultivated strip in no case reaches more than a quarter of a mile from the bank of the river.

The cultivators mostly live in tents, with a few mud villages here and there. The only considerable places are Abu Seira, with about 500 houses; Meyadin, with about 1,000 houses and good shops, a town from which considerable quantities of wool and butter are exported on mule-back to Aleppo; and Abu'l Kemál with about 500 houses. From Abu'l Kemal to Nahiye (shown on Kiepert's map as Kasin El Asaye), a distance of about 40 miles, both sides of the river are practically uninhabited, and either bare or covered with tamarisk. A short way below Nahiye cultivation recommences, irrigation being effected by means of water-wheels or "náúrs." The strip of cultivation so maintained is, however, very narrow, and it produces no surplus grain available for export.

Cultivation by mean of "naurs" is continued as far as Hit, below which irrigation by

means of water-lifts recommences and continues as far as Felúja. The principal places between Nahíye and Felúja are Ana, a prosperous town of about 1,500 houses, which exports wool, butter, and dates by mule-caravan to Aleppo, and receives from Deir El Zor grain, soap, honey, and spices (which come originally from Birejik); Hadisa, El Uz, and Jibba, small island towns which exports dates to Aleppo; Hit, containing about 10,000 inhabitants, and producing bitumen, salt, lime, and dates; and Ramádí, with about 6,000 inhabitants, exporting large quantities of dates. It is very difficult to make an approximately accurate estimate of the river-borne traffic on the portion of the Euphrates lying between Deir El Zor and Felúja. There is no doubt that it is not so considerable above Hit as the traffic between Birejik and Deir El Zor, and it fluctuates more than the latter. There is practically no through traffic from Birejik to places below Deir. The merchants of Deir buy up the Birejik boats with their cargoes, and re-export about a quarter of the goods so obtained to places lower down the river. There was a fleet of thirty empty Birejik boats moored at Deir when I passed through, and I was told that about 150 boats leave Deir every year. A good deal of grain is collected from the cultivated tract between Meyadin and Abu'l Kemál for the consumption of Ana, and again above Hit and Ramádí for the supply of those towns. A very large quantity of firewood is collected by the men of Ana from the neighbourhood of Abu'l Kemál, and floated down to Kerbala by the Hindieh Canal when the water is high. From Hit enormous quantities of bitumen, lime, and salt are exported in the large, light Hit, boats, the biggest of which cost only 10 Mejidiehs to construct; but no steamer could compete with this cheap form of transport in regard to these articles, which need not therefore be taken into consideration.

The approximate average annual weight of river-borne traffic below Deir may be estimated as follows:—

	Tons.
Deir to Ana—	
Grain	200
Miscellaneous	20
Deir to below Ana—	
Hadisa Hit and Ramádí—	
Grain	400
Miscellaneous	50
Country between Meyadin and Abu'l—	
Kemál to Ana—	
Grain	50
Total below Deir (excluding Hit boats)	720

Very little traffic is said to go from the upper parts of the Euphrates to below Felúja, owing to the difficulty experienced by the boats built at Birejik in crossing the dam across the river at the mouth of the Hindieh Canal; but I was told that a good number of the Hit boats, the cargo of which is not very valuable, go down to Bussorah with bitumen and lime.

7. *Cost of Freight.*—The cost of freight for goods conveyed in the Birejik boats may be said to consist in the difference in the cost of the boat at Birejik and the price obtained by its sale at its destination, added to the cost of the labour of the two boatmen who go with each boat. The freight from Birejik to Deir may be worked out as follows:—

	£ T.
Original cost of boat at Birejik, £ T. 4½	4½
Subtract price of boat at destination	2
Net cost of boat	2½
Wages of boatmen for going and returning	2
Net cost of conveyance of boat load to Deir	4½

Cost per ton (one boat carries about 5 tons) about 98 piastres.

Merchants sending goods by these boats buy the boats, hire the boatmen, and send an agent in charge of the goods, dispatching separate advices by land to the consignees; so that the wages of the agent should be added to the above amount. The risk incurred by boats owing to the wind and shallows must also be taken into consideration. From all that I could gather, about 3 per cent. of the boats are wrecked on the journey.

8. *Possibility of Development of River Traffic by a Steamer.*—I will now shortly consider the possibilities of the development of the existing river traffic, should a steamer be placed on the upper part of the Euphrates. With regard to the downward traffic, it does not appear likely that the export of grain could be largely increased. The tribes

on the banks below Meskeneh are not disposed to cultivate for the sake of profit; and the narrowness of the cultivable strip between the river-banks and the chalk hills which bound the whole course of the river down to Hit, makes it impossible to greatly increase the productiveness of this region. It seems probable, however, that a steamer running from Birejik to Felúja would finally secure the carriage of the whole of the Aleppo cottons and embroidered work for Bagdad, which now go by caravan, and the annual value of which is estimated at £ T. 6,000. Miscellaneous trade in onions, spices, and hardware with the tribes on the banks, who were continually calling out to my boat wishing to purchase such articles, would also be considerable, and would increase.

With regard to upward traffic, which does not now exist, there can be no doubt that the steamer would secure a very large share of the traffic in dates and camel's-hair cloaks now exported from Bagdad to Syria, the annual value of which is estimated to be about £ T. 8,000. It would also probably carry a large share of the Ispahan and Shiraz tobacco exported by way of Bagdad to Syria, the annual value of which is estimated to be £ T. 50,000.

Conclusion.—My conclusions regarding the possibility of profitably navigating the Euphrates above Felúja are as follows:—

In the months of April, May, June, and July, when the river is full, the descent of the river would offer very little difficulty to a light-draught steamer, and could be accomplished with very great speed. The swiftness of the current at this time of year would, however, make the upward journey very slow; and it would be necessary for the steamer to be capable of a continuous speed of not less than 12 knots per hour in order to make head against the rapid stretch between Ana and Hit. In the months of December, January, February, and March, both the upward and downward journey of even a light-draught steamer would be attended with considerable risk, unless engineering works were carried out in the stretches between Hadisa and El Uz, in the passage from Karabla Islands to below Ana, and in the shallow rapids at Abu Jabea or Funsa, and below the Islands of Hammam. In the first two of the above-mentioned places the artificial channel excavated by the Turkish authorities in 1870 is still almost intact, and I do not think that very heavy expense would be necessary.

Some apparatus would, however, have to be erected for the purpose of warping the steamer up over the ledge of Fat Hat Huddur Elias, and a towpath would probably have to be constructed on the left side of the river from below Ana to above Karabla Island. In the neighbourhood of Abu Jabea and Hammam, the placing of four or five dams part of the way across the river-bed would sufficiently deepen the channel.

In the months of August, September, October, and November navigation by a steamer would, I believe, be too risky to be profitable.

The best boatmen of Ana are so intimately acquainted with the bed of the river between Birejik and Hit that it would obviously be advisable to secure the services of one of these men as pilot for any steamer plying on the river. If a really competent man of Ana were employed for this purpose, there would probably be little risk to a light-draught steamer except in the four autumn months. There are no sudden bends in the navigable channel, and the steamer employed could be as long as might be considered necessary. On the upward journey it would, perhaps, be possible to tow one or two flat-bottomed boats. On the journey downstream towing would be dangerous, but a flat might be fastened to the side of the steamer.

A steamer going only as far up the river as Meskeneh would probably not pay, as it would have no share in the important grain-trade of Birejik and the neighbouring region with the towns lower down the river. If it were to go up as far as Birejik, however, it would probably have as much cargo as it could carry, which would consist mainly of wheat, Aleppo cottons and soap, on the downward journey, and dates, Persian tobacco, and camel's-hair cloaks on the upward journey. There would be a good deal of local traffic, which would tend to increase, with the tribes on the bank; and the large supplies of liquorice, which stretch along the river-bank for about 60 miles below Abu Hareira, might ultimately furnish material for a busy trade. Moreover, if it were once proved that the journey by steamer could be made safely and regularly at a speed not exceeding that of caravans, the number of passengers between Meskeneh and Felúja would only be limited by the accommodation.

The completion of the projected railway from Constantinople to Bagdad with a branch line to Aleppo, would probably divert all through passenger traffic between Aleppo and Bagdad to that railway; but the amount of goods traffic would probably not be affected, as a steamer would carry between Syria and Turkish Arabia far more cheaply than the roundabout railway.

The question of fuel might present some difficulties. There are inexhaustible supplies of bitumen and oil at Hit, which were used by Chesney for stoking his steamer on part of his voyage, and there are dense jungles of tamarisk between Abu'l Kemál and Salchiye, and between Halebi Jaberi and Abu Hareira.

The tribes on the banks of the Euphrates are nowhere very troublesome between Birejik and Feldja. Ibrahim Pasha, Head of the Hamadiyes, occasionally raids down across Mesopotamia as far as Rakka, on the left bank; and the powerful Diem tribe, which commences shortly above Hit and stretches nearly down to Feldja, is thievish, and has a bad character. But there would be no danger of trouble to a steamer from these sources.

(Signed) H. DOBBS.

February 15, 1903.

[39486] No. 149.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 2.)

(No. 717.)

Sir, *Pera, November* 26, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copies of despatches from His Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout and His Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, reporting the occurrence of bread riots in those cities. The scarcity and dearness of provisions are undoubtedly being severely felt throughout the empire, in spite of the efforts made by the Central Government to reduce prices by prohibiting the export of grain and allowing the importation of flour duty free, and it is anticipated that the state of affairs will be even worse in the spring when this year's harvest is exhausted.

Meat is also likely to become much dearer, as many animals were lost last winter owing to the unusually hard season and the difficulty of feeding them, and many more will probably perish this winter owing to the scarcity of fodder.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

P.S.—Since writing the above, I have learned from the Sublime Porte that the general prohibition, reported in Sir R. Drummond-Hay's despatch, has been limited by their orders to wheat and barley.

N. R. O'C.

Inclosure 1 in No. 149.

Consul Longworth to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 38.)

Sir, *Aleppo, November* 5, 1907.

YOUR Excellency will have received my telegram of the 3rd instant, worded as follows:—

"Bread riots have occurred here. Wheat and flour warehouses have been sacked. Little bloodshed. Order restored by troops."

I would now report that last Tuesday several Moslem merchants clubbed together and cornered the wheat. The people's bread, already dear, rose consequently in price to nearly double. Petitions and protests were so far ignored that the masses lost hope, and on Sunday morning ran riot. Grain and other storehouses were gutted before the troops turned out, and by overhead volleys dispersed the throngs of men, women, and children.

The Vali acted with judgment, vigour, and courage. Circulating the streets almost unguarded, he soon succeeded, though mobbed at more than one corner, in drawing towards him and in securing the services of the law-abiding inhabitants. He moreover checked any further development of the disturbance by promptly announcing through public criers the decision of the authorities to reduce the price of bread and to interdict the export of wheat.

The casualties were three killed and about thirty wounded, mostly by stones. The stores carried off have in the main been recovered. The ringleaders arrested

number forty, of whom seventeen have been expelled to Marash, and at least one of the rest, who cried out "Death is better than starvation!" will undergo trial on the grave charge of inciting the people to revolt.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 149.

Consul-General Sir R. Hay Drummond-Hay to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 96.)

Sir, *Beyrout, November* 9, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to report that an order from the Vali, based on a decision of the Administrative Council of Beyrout, has been lately published and communicated to all seaports of the vilayet, preventing the exportation of wheat, darri seed, barley, and cattle to any foreign country and even to Ottoman ports, except those situated within the Vilayet of Beyrout.

This measure was brought about by extraordinary demonstrations made by several thousand persons belonging to the lower classes, who, owing to the unprecedented rise in prices of foodstuffs, paraded the streets, attacked the stores of wheat and barley, unloaded waggons with grain ready for exportation, and demanded from the local authorities that all the grain should be kept for local consumption.

Owing to the failure of crops in general, and especially to those of Asia Minor and of Gaza and Lattakia in Syria, the exportation of grain to Europe, which was principally from the two latter districts, took place this year from Homs and Hama, from whence Beyrout and its neighbourhood had always obtained their supplies. Those districts had also to provide grain for the whole country, and to export a large portion of its produce to Asia Minor and Europe at the same time.

This is the reason why the prices of wheat, barley, &c., rose to nearly 50 per cent. above their normal value.

Under these circumstances, and fearing a famine, the Vali decided, with the approval of his Administrative Council, to temporarily prevent the exportation of grain.

I have not received any protest against this measure from exporters interested in British trade.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. HAY DRUMMOND-HAY.

P.S.—*November* 19, 1907.—Since writing the above the demonstrations have been repeated by even larger numbers of the inhabitants. They lately stopped the carriage of the Vali on his way to the Konak, and demanded an abatement in the prices of flour. His Excellency promised to consider their demands, and he has since succeeded in effecting a reduction of 20 per cent. in the prices.

The populace, however, are not yet satisfied, and are claiming for further reduction.

R. H. D-H.

[39489] No. 150.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 2.)

(No. 720.)

Sir, *Pera, November* 26, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to report that from what the Grand Vizier admits to me, as well as from what I hear from outside sources, a serious crisis has taken place at Diarbekir. No private telegrams passed through for some time, but it became known that the neighbouring country had been overrun by Ibrahim Pasha, who was even stated to be surrounding the city with a force of 16,000 men; the Moslem notables had practically deposed the Vali, and seizing the telegraph office, placed themselves in communication with Yildiz, and demanded of the Sultan that measures should be taken to reform the Administration and to suppress Ibrahim Pasha. The Grand Vizier in telling me of the situation appeared to be even less concerned than I should have expected, one reason perhaps being that he believes that his Government could at any time, by the use of force, make themselves masters of the situation. The only measures of which he spoke as having been taken by the Palace were far from

promising, one being the appointment as Vali of the present Vali of Mosul, Mustapha Bey, who is a brother of Izzet Pasha, and notoriously corrupt and worthless, and the other an invitation to Ibrahim Pasha to proceed to Aleppo as the guest of the Government; but I learn to-day that a Commission has also been sent from Aleppo to inquire into and redress the grievances of the inhabitants of Diarbekir, and that tranquillity has in consequence been restored and the movement subsided. The French Embassy, who had been alarmed for the safety of their Consul, also to-day received a message from him stating that foreigners were in no danger, and that order had been well maintained in the town.

In discussing this state of things with the Grand Vizier yesterday, I took advantage of the opportunity to remark to his Highness that the contingency which I had lately foreshadowed (see my despatch No. 524 of the 28th August) seemed to be coming to pass even sooner than I anticipated, and that I trusted he would profit by the occasion and point the moral when the Turco-Persian frontier question was next under discussion between him and the Palace.

His Highness admitted that there was possibly a connection between what was happening at Diarbekir and the situation of affairs across the Persian frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[39493] No. 151.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 2.)

(No. 724.)
Sir, *Constantinople, November 27, 1907.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 651 of the 15th September, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Bussorah, reporting on fighting in the Nejd between Bin Saoud and Bin Reshid.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 151.

Consul Crow to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 70. Confidential.)
Sir, *Bussorah, October 29, 1907.*

IN continuation of my despatch No. 60, Confidential, of the 20th September last, I have the honour to report that Major Knox, the Political Agent at Koweit, informs me that Bin Saoud advanced from Shagra on the Dawish and the people of Boraida, among whom Bin Reshid was encamped, and some skirmishing took place between the horsemen of Bin Saoud and those of Faisul-ed-Dawish. Operations seem to have been indecisive, and Bin Saoud, with the Ataiba, moved forces to Hadaiya, four hours east of Boraida, where they were attacked by the men of Bin Reshid and Boraida and by the Umtair. The Umtair closed with the Ataiba and carried off most of their cattle, and the townsmen of Boraida pressed Bin Saoud for two hours. Two members of Bin Saoud's family (Saad-bin-Abdur Rahman and one of the Araif) and two of the Sbi'a (Ibn Mijfil and his son) were killed, and Bin Saoud sent to the Anaiza for help. As the latter were coming up they were attacked and broken by the men of Boraida, and suffered heavy loss. Sultan Bin Reshid then withdrew to fetch his Shammar tribesmen from Gnaiba. A further engagement took place later in the Boraida date gardens, in which Bin Saoud was victorious, and the Umtair were badly beaten, and retired to Majma'a. Nearly all the Umtair have made submission to Bin Saoud, and Sultan Bin Reshid, with his men and two of his brothers, is shut up in Boraida, and is being besieged by Bin Saoud.

It seems unlikely that Sultan Bin Reshid will recover from this defeat for some time. Bin Saoud is said to have turned all his Ataiba, Sbi'a, and Bedouin hordes loose on the Boraida date gardens, where they made worse havoc than a swarm of locusts.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. E. CROW.

[39496] No. 152.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 2.)

(No. 132. Commercial.)
Sir, *Pera, November 25, 1907.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 403 of the 28th September last, I have the honour to report that I have made inquiries of His Majesty's Consul-General at Beirut and His Majesty's Consul at Aleppo respecting the Moslem Company which is said to have obtained a Concession for a railway from Tripoli to Homs.

Mr. Longworth has little information to give, but the inclosed despatch from Sir R. Drummond-Hay, which shows that the affair has made but little progress at present, may be of interest.

I have no knowledge of the standing of Messrs. Ramsay, Marshall, or Skinner, in London, but, unless other facts have reached your Department, I do not think that the scheme is in any way promising. It is certain that it would arouse strong French opposition, and equally strong German opposition, in view of the French and German railway interests to which it would run counter, and, even on its own merits, the line would not follow the most profitable route for a railway in that region, as Alexandretta, which has a better harbour and a wider field of distribution, should be the terminus rather than Tripoli.

For these reasons I am inclined to think that the Concession is merely one of the many worthless Concessions which are hawked from the Palace, and is unlikely to be developed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 152.

Consul-General Sir R. Hay-Drummond-Hay to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 98.)
Sir, *Beirut, November 14, 1907.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 22nd October last, relating to the Moslem Company (Ezzedine and Company) which is interested in a railroad from Tripoli to Homs, I have the honour to report that a number of Moslems, the leader of which is Mustafa Ezzedine, have, according to their account, obtained the promise of a Concession to build a railroad for the sum of 40,000*l.*, half of which is to be paid by a Mr. Skinner, an Englishman, of London, and the balance to be raised by Tripoli people.

The Acting Vice-Consul at Tripoli states that the latter held a meeting last week, and the money was subscribed, but, when Mustafa Ezzedine refused to permit the names of some of the larger subscribers to appear in the Concession obtained from the Porte, they withdrew their names, and the whole project hangs in the air for the present, at least.

Mustafa Ezzedine, who was lately in Beirut, informed me that he visited Constantinople and obtained a promise for the Concession from Tahsin Pasha, through the medium of Nijjib Pasha Melkauié, and that the above-mentioned sum of money will be deposited in a bank and paid on delivery of the Firman.

Mustafa has also visited England and entered into negotiations with Messrs. Skinner, Marshall, and Ramsay. These gentlemen began by forming an Anglo-German Syndicate, which fell through, and they are now making other arrangements with exclusively English capitalists.

The distance between Tripoli and Homs is 90 kilom., and the expenses for constructing a railway are estimated at 320,000*l.*, including the costs of the Concession, &c.

There exists at present a diligence service between Tripoli and Homs, and the Moslems who wish to join Ezzedine in applying for the Concession are the principal shareholders of the Diligence Company.

I believe the Managers of the French railway enterprise (Damas–Biredjik) are almost certain to raise objections to the construction of the line Tripoli–Homs by the would-be concessionnaires, basing their opposition on Article 36 of their own Concession of 1309, and claiming preference for all new branches from their main line to the sea.

On the other hand, the Concession of the Tripoli–Homs Diligence Company, dated

December 1297, contains clauses in Articles 9 and 10 giving them clearly preference to construct a railway to Homs.

With regard to the Bagdad Railway, Article 12 of the Concession authorizes the exploitation of every new branch from the main line to the Mediterranean between the port of Mersina and that of Tripoli, in Syria.

I beg to inclose extracts of the above-mentioned Articles from each of the Concessions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. HAY-DRUMMOND-HAY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 152.

Extracts from respective Concessions.

Concession Chaussée Tripoli–Homs du 15 Décembre, 1297.

ARTICLE 9. Si dans l'avenir une Concession était donnée à une autre Société pour la construction d'un chemin de fer ou d'un tramway parallèle à la chaussée, celle-ci aura alors la faculté de faire estimer, par des experts compétents, son matériel, ses bestiaux, et toutes ses existences, de céder le tout avec une majoration de 20 pour cent aux nouveaux concessionnaires qui auraient entrepris la construction de la ligne et de dissoudre ainsi la Société. Les fondateurs de la chaussée pourraient dans tous les cas continuer, s'ils le veulent, l'exploitation de la chaussée comme par le passé.

Article 10. A l'apparition d'une Compagnie qui se formerait pour prendre sur la voie même de la chaussée la construction éventuelle d'une ligne de chemin de fer ou de tramway, la chaussée aura la préférence; et si elle refuse cette préférence, la Concession pourrait alors être cédée à d'autres.

Concession de Chemin de Fer Damas–Biredjik, Année 1309.

Article 36. La Concession aura à conditions égales le droit de préférence dans le cas où il sera décidé par le Gouvernement la construction de nouveaux embranchements partant de la ligne principale et aboutissant jusqu'à la mer.

Concession de Chemin de Fer de Bagdad.

Article 12. Le Gouvernement s'engage absolument à concéder à la Société la construction et l'exploitation de tout nouvel embranchement qui aboutirait à la Méditerranée entre le port de Mersine et celui de Tripoli de Syrie.

[37861] No. 153.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 489.)
Foreign Office, December 2, 1907.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 694 of the 12th ultimo, reporting an improvement in the state of the Vilayet of Bitlis.

I approve your Excellency's proposal to urge upon the Grand Vizier the removal of the Defterdar and the Mutessarif of Moush.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

[39789] No. 154.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 4.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley,

forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 31st October, relative to Nejd affairs.

India Office, December 3, 1907.

Inclosure 1 in No. 154.

Mr. Bill to Government of India.

Bushire, October 12, 1907.

IN continuation of this Office letter, dated the 15th September, 1907, I have the honour to forward, for the information of the Government of India, a copy of the communication received from the Political Agent, Koweit, on the subject of Nejd affairs.

Inclosure 2 in No. 154.

Major Knox to Major Cox.

Koweit, September 29, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to forward the following Report from Nejd:—

Abdul Aziz-ul-Hussan recently sent a messenger, a man of no special importance, and not one of Sheikh Mobarak's servants, with letters for the Sheikh. This man was travelling with a party of Towata Aniza Bedouins, about twenty-five strong.

At Ath Thamami they were set upon by Ajman tribesmen, who robbed them of arms, camels, and everything they possessed, and they came through to Koweit on foot and in a destitute condition. The Towata are the Aniza sub-section, who hang about in Koweit territory. Ath Thamami is a group of wells in the Batin, two days beyond Hafar, and just inside the Dahna sandbelt.

The leader of the Ajman raiders was one Muhammad-ud-Damir, one of the Sheikhs of the Tha'an section of the Ajman.

It is by no means certain that the outrage at Ath Thamama had any political significance, or that it was specially directed to get possession of Sheikh Mobarak's post-bag. It seemed more likely that it was an ordinary incident of desert travel.

The news brought verbally by the messenger is to the effect that no one on the side of Bin Rashid has paid the smallest attention to Abdul Aziz-ul-Hassan's well-meant efforts in the cause of peace. Indeed, Faisul-ud-Dawish, Sheikh of the Umtair, flatly refused to obey his instructions.

Haza'a-bin-Ishgair and Badar-bin-Muhammad-ud-Dawash are at Aj Ja'ala wells in the tract of Al Asyah, about eight hours from Boraida, for a riding camel, and a day and a-half for a caravan. The report that they were inclining towards Bin Saud and that the Umtair were divided against themselves is now completely discredited.

The result of Abdul Aziz-ul-Hussan's overtures to Bin Saud is unknown. One recent report places the latter at Shagra, and says that he has no Bedouins with him, but his sympathizers state that he has advanced some distance towards El-Kasim, and is in strength.

It may be noted that this last batch of Ajman raiders have nothing to do with the party who, as reported in recent diaries of this Agency, recently looted a caravan destined for Koweit. The leaders of that party were Ikhmayas Al Manaikhar Sheikh of the section of the As Safran, and Raikan of the Bani Hithlain family. The negotiations for the recovery of that looted property appear to be also delayed.

It would seem that the hinterland is in a very disturbed state, and that Sheikh Mobarak's authority is not respected to the same extent as formerly, though no doubt this has no special significance, and is merely a part of the general unrest consequent on the two leaders of Central Arabia preparing again for battle.

Inclosure 3 in No. 154.

Mr. Bill to Government of India.

Bushire, October 12, 1907.

WITH reference to this Office letter, dated the 21st October, 1906, on the subject of a possible Arab confederacy, I have the honour to forward, for the information of the Government of India, a copy of the communication received from the Political Agent, Koweit, in this connection.

Inclosure 4 in No. 154.

Major Knox to Major Cox.

Koweit, September 28, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to invite a reference to correspondence on the subject of the possibility of a coalition between the Arab Sheikhs at the head of the Gulf, last alluded to in paragraph 4 of Secret despatch, dated the 5th September, 1907, from the Government of India to the Secretary of State for India.

2. An incident—I do not wish to exaggerate its importance—has recently come to my notice which is perhaps suggestive in this connection. Sheikh Isaud-ul-Fugam, with his son Badah, visited me this morning, both dressed in robes of honour. They are usually in rags. Isaud, before his departure, had to beg me for an abba for his son to enable him to make a proper appearance on Sheikh Mubarak's yacht.

3. It appears that they accompanied Sheikh Mobarak on his last visit to Muhammerah, and received valuable presents when there from Sheikh Khazal. I should say that the clothes they were wearing would be worth at least 100 dollars, about 12*l.*, and I learnt that they received cash presents besides. They were deeply impressed with a sense of Sheikh Khazal's magnificence.

[39855] No. 155.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 4.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 2nd instant, relative to the Muscat Arbitration award.

India Office, December 4, 1907.

Inclosure in No. 155.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P. *December* 2, 1907.

PLEASE see telegram from Major Grey as to French flag, dated the 15th October, and inclosed in Secretary's letter of the 24th idem.

The Political Agent, Muscat, reports that he has addressed Resident in Persian Gulf in following sense:—

"Please see my telegram of the 15th ultimo as to the French flag. I have not yet received the final instructions referred to. I am awaiting them anxiously."

[39210] No. 156.

Sir Edward Grey to M. Cambon.

SIR E. GREY presents his compliments to the French Ambassador, and, with reference to the Memorandum respecting the Muscat Dhows Arbitration communicated to his Excellency on the 6th August, has the honour to state that he would be much

obliged if M. Cambon would inform him whether the French Government formally accept the proposals of His Majesty's Government, as explained in the last two paragraphs of that paper respecting the grant of the right to fly the French flag to Muscatis in the service of French citizens resident in Oman, and the annual exchange between the French and British Consuls of lists of dhows owned by French citizens and of persons entitled to fly the French flag.

On receiving an intimation to this effect, the necessary instructions will be issued to His Majesty's Consul at Muscat.

Foreign Office, December 4, 1907.

[39897] No. 157.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 5.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 31st October, relative to the evacuation of Dthala.

India Office, December 4, 1907.

Inclosure 1 in No. 157.

Extracts from the weekly Letters of the Resident at Aden, dated October 5, 12, *and* 19, 1907.

For week ending October 5, 1907.

MAJOR JACOB reported his arrival at Sheikh Othman yesterday and came in to see me in the afternoon. As I have already reported by wire, the withdrawal from Dthala is now complete, and the demolition of the various forts on the road which had to be destroyed has been carried out. Complications arose over the demolition of Dar-al-Kabtan, for which a change of mind on the part of the Alawi Sheikh at the last moment was responsible, with the result that Jacob could not in the short time at his disposal get the Alawi and the Kotaibi Agreements signed. I shall in due course report the matter officially. Jacob reports that the signing of the Haushabi Agreement had to be similarly postponed owing to some disorder at Musemir which necessitated the Sultan's presence there. I have now summoned all three Chiefs to Aden for the signing of the Agreements on or before the 15th instant. It is possible that the Fast of Ramazan which begins to-morrow may lead to some slight further delay, and the attitude of the Alawi Sheikh is, I gather, rather uncertain.

I am forwarding by this mail Major Jacob's official Report regarding his withdrawal from the hinterland and the demolition of the forts at Suleik and Dar-al-Kabtan. I have not received replies yet to my letters summoning the Haushabi, Alawi and Kotaibi Chiefs to Aden to sign the proposed Agreements, but the Alawi Sheikh has written at some length regarding the destruction of Dar-al-Kabtan.

For week ending October 12, 1907.

I had an interview with the Amir of Dthala yesterday, and propose to have another next Wednesday. At present, he still evinces a desire to obtain our assistance towards consolidating his power and more particularly his revenue, and he makes a grievance of the fact that Jacob has not done more in this direction in the past.

For week ending October 19, 1907.

I have now received letters from the Kotaibi and Haushabi, as well as another letter from the Alawi Chief regarding the proposed agreements with them. As I anticipated in my letter of the 5th instant, further progress is delayed by the Ramazan fast, and I do

not expect any of the Chiefs to visit Aden until that is over. The Kotaibi evinces a desire to press for a larger stipend than that suggested, and for the right to levy transit dues on the road. Neither his attitude nor that of the Alawi is at present promising. Beyond referring to the Ramazan fast, the Haushabi only says that he has one Agreement with us already.

2. I had another interview with the Amir of Dthala on the 16th instant, and made it clear to him that, whilst we should be pleased to see his power so consolidated as to render direct dealings with any of his tribesmen unnecessary, it still rested with him to show that he could exercise such control without a degree of support and intervention on our part which it was neither our custom nor our intention to accord.

Inclosure 2 in No. 157.

Government of Bombay to Government of India.

Bombay Castle, October 18, 1907.

WITH reference to the correspondence ending with Foreign Department telegram dated the 21st September, 1907, I am directed to forward herewith, for the information of the Government of India, a copy of a Confidential letter, dated the 11th instant, from the Political Resident, Aden, inclosing copy of a Memorandum, dated the 4th idem, by Major Jacob, in which he reports the circumstances under which the evacuation of the hinterland has been accomplished and the forts at Suleik and Dar-al-Kabtan were demolished.

2. I am to state that any remarks which the Bombay Government may desire to make on these papers will be submitted to the Government of India hereafter.

Inclosure 3 in No. 157.

Political Resident, Aden, to Government of Bombay.

(Confidential.) *Aden, October* 11, 1907.

WITH reference to correspondence ending with my telegram dated the 4th instant, regarding the withdrawal of the Political Agent, Dthala, and his escort from the hinterland, and the conclusion of certain Agreements with the Chiefs of the Haushabi, Alawi, and Kotaibi tribes, I have the honour to forward, for the information of Government, copy of a Memorandum, dated the 4th October, 1907, in which Major Jacob reports the circumstances under which the evacuation of the hinterland has been now accomplished and the forts at Suleik and Dar-al-Kabtan demolished.

2. I withhold comment on the situation to which the Alawi Sheikh's change of attitude has given rise pending the result of further negotiations for the signing of the three Agreements at Aden upon which I am now engaged. I have summoned each of the Chiefs concerned to Aden for the signature of these Agreements on or before the 15th instant, and still await replies to the letters addressed to them.

3. Meanwhile, and pending the issue of orders on this Office letter, dated the 25th August, 1907, Major Jacob remains at Sheikh Othman charged with the direct control of the affairs of the tribes which formerly lay within his sphere of influence at Dthala, and with the completion of a history of the same upon which he has recently been engaged.

Inclosure 4 in No. 157.

Memorandum on the Evacuation of Dthala, with special reference to the Signing of the Agreements.

PURSUANT to the Resident's instructions, I arranged a conference at Lahej of the Amir of Dthala, the Kotaibi, and Alawi Chiefs, with prominent Saiyids. The Sultan of Lahej was present. At this interview the respective limits on the trade route for each Chief interested to safeguard were carefully settled by me and these Chiefs in combination. It was also arranged that, along with the demolition of Fort Suleik and Dar-al-Kabtan (Alawi), there should be a dismantling of the Hardaba blockhouse (Amiri and Dar Taiz, Kotaibi), which the Kotaibi Chief had recently built as an opposition fort to Dar-al-Kabtan.

The gift to Ali Nashir, the Alawi Chief, of 300 rupees from the Abdali Sultan had now finally eradicated all suspicion from the former's mind, and documents were formally entered upon by him and the Kotaibi Chief with the Abdali Sultan in which their respective limits, as well as their consent to the demolition of their Dars, were duly entered. This was hereafter to be ratified by me on the conclusion of the Agreement.

2. Shortly afterwards, on my arrival at Fort Suleik, there was a difference of opinion between the Alawi and Kotaibi as to the priority of the demolition of their respective forts, each insisting that the other's building should be the first to go down.

3. On my way down from Dthala on evacuation, on the 28th September I had Fort Suleik and the Hardaba blockhouse dismantled by the 81st Pioneers, while I persuaded the Kotaibi to pull down Dar Taiz, and sent up men of the 81st Pioneers with some Aden troopers to insure the work being done completely. This programme was acceptable to both parties. With the question of priority thus arranged, I ascended the hill on which Dar-al-Kabtan stands in company with the demolition party of 81st Pioneers.

4. On the hill I met with considerable opposition. Sheikh Ali Nashir, the Alawi, refused to give me the necessary permission unless I paid the 500 rupees into his hands. I reminded him that the receipt of the amount was contingent on *his* demolishing the Dar and building another elsewhere; that I had, however, come up the hill *at his own special invitation* to effect the demolition; that the "priority objection" had not been previously raised at Lahej, but the point had been ceded by the Kotaibi in the interest of peace and good-will, and that this further objection now raised was not only ridiculous, but obstructive and unfriendly.

5. At this juncture the Alawi contingent on the hill, comprising over fifty or sixty armed men, and made up of Alawis, Dthambaries, and Hajailis, began to show signs of hostility and to threaten severe measures if the demolition of the Dar were effected without the Alawi's permission, which was to be accorded only if the 500 rupees were forthwith produced and paid in. A Dthambari with whom I expostulated drew a bead on me with his loaded carbine, and had he not been seized by his people, the situation would have become distinctly awkward.

6. The Kotaibi, on the opposite hill at Dar Taiz, seeing the night coming on and Dar-al-Kabtan still standing, feared I had gone back on my word, and sent me a message that until I completed the demolition our sepoys would remain in their hands as hostages.

7. Sheikh Ali Nashir now decamped in a rage, leaving thirty men on the hill and refusing me the necessary permission to demolish his Dar. I was therefore constrained to cede to the Sheikh's request, because

(1.) I should have placed the Pioneers' demolition party in an awkward predicament had the Dar been demolished forcibly, and because—

(2.) The Kotaibi's treatment of our hostages depended on the razing of the Alawi Dar.

I could not, with Dar-al-Kabtan standing, leave the country, which would then have become a veritable pandemonium. It was now pitch dark. I paid the 500 rupees and blew up the Dar. I then proceeded to the Kotaibi camp and released the "détenus."

8. The Kotaibi Chief promised to sign the Agreement the following day at Al Millah, but instead of coming he wrote to say that the crowds of Kotaibis, who had now poured in, prevented his coming in just then. Were he to come without their permission, they would believe he had taken the monetary presents himself for his own use, and they would at once create discord; that he must therefore perforce postpone awhile his appearance.

9. There may be a momentary hitch in these proceedings owing to the proximity of Ramazan observances, but I feel sure that Mahomed Salch has every inducement to come in and sign his Agreement and that he will come.

10. I am not so sanguine of Sheikh Ali's movement. He was entirely responsible for the *contretemps* on the hill, and has broken the solemn pledges given at the Lahej Conference.

11. The Haushabi Sultan should have signed his Agreement at Nobat Dakim, but wrote to say that some minor internal dissensions in his country would necessitate his deferring his arrival. I am inclined to believe that preparations for the Ramazan have caused Ali Mani to stay away. He will doubtless come in ere long.

12. I am particularly indebted to Lieutenant Alexander, of the 81st Pioneers, for the very efficient and personal assistance rendered by him in the demolition of all these buildings.

(Signed) H. F. JACOB.

Aden, October 4, 1907.

[39898] No. 158.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 5.)

THE Under-Secretary of State for India presents his compliments to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and, by direction of Mr. Secretary Morley, forwards herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of inclosures in a letter from the Foreign Secretary to the Government of India, dated the 7th November, relative to affairs of the Aden Hinterland.

India Office, December 4, 1907.

Inclosure 1 in No. 158.

Government of Bombay to Government of India.

(Secret.) *Bombay Castle, October 1, 1907.*

WITH reference to Captain Barnes' letter dated the 13th June last, I am directed to transmit herewith, for the information of the Government of India, copy of correspondence relative to the settlement of disputes and claims affecting Turkish subjects having interests on the British side of the demarcated frontier and *vice versâ*.

2. In forwarding these papers I am to state that the Governor in Council agrees that the proposition in paragraph 2 of Captain Barnes' above-quoted letter meets the requirements of the case, but is of opinion that it does not reach all the personal claims that may arise.

As the Political Agent has, however, left D'thala by this time, the Governor in Council thinks no useful purpose would be served by further discussion of the matter.

Inclosure 2 in No. 158.

Political Resident, Aden, to Government of Bombay.

(Telegraphic.) *July 3, 1907.*

YOUR telegram dated the 30th June.

Report awaited from Political Agent at D'thala. Meanwhile I concur generally with views expressed in paragraph 2 of Government of India letter.

Inclosure 3 in No. 158.

Political Resident, Aden, to Government of Bombay.

(Confidential.) *Aden Residency, July 13, 1907.*

WITH reference to correspondence ending with my telegram dated the 3rd July last, relative to the settlement of disputes and claims affecting Turkish subjects on the British side of the demarcated frontier and *vice versâ*, I have the honour to state that a report has now been received from the Political Agent, D'thala, in which he states that it has not yet been possible to arrange the meeting referred to in his Memorandum dated the 23rd March last, owing to the Kaimakam's continuous absence at An Nadara, near which place there has been fighting between the Turkish forces and the followers of the Imam of Yemen.

From the attached copy of his note on the subject dated the 8th July last, it will be observed that he also concurs in the views expressed in paragraph 2 of Foreign Department letter dated the 13th June last, but expresses the opinion that, whilst tithes should go to the authority within whose jurisdiction the land is situated, revenues in kind should be paid to the overlord of the subject concerned.

3. Thus the individual landowner concerned would appear liable to two charges—

(1.) A tithe to the authority within whose jurisdiction the land is situated;

(2.) Some other form of payment in kind to the authority within whose jurisdiction he himself resides.

4. I am asking the Political Agent, D'thala, for a further report on the point, but meanwhile I am myself of opinion that it should suffice to declare that private rights in land are not affected by the demarcation, but that, on the other hand, the rights of government or suzerainty or overlordship are, so far as the lands are concerned, thereby transferred to the authority within whose limits they are actually situated.

5. Thus the rights of a landlord as opposed to an overlord would not be affected, but, on the other hand, a claim to overlordship over person would not entail any claim to revenues over land held in direct tenancy from the subject of another Government.

Inclosure 4 in No. 158.

Report by the Political Agent, D'thala, dated July 8, 1907.

NO meeting with the Kaimakam of Kataba has yet been possible owing to his continuous absence at An Nadara, in the vicinity of Jabuli, where there is fighting between Turks and Imam's Lieutenants.

2. I thoroughly agree with paragraph 2 of Government of India letter. All I have ever had to urge was that the Turkish Sheikhs across the line were exacting, *qua* tithes, more than the amount recognized by Moslem tradition. *Primâ facie*, Amiri subjects whose lands have passed across the line and who feel aggrieved because of excessive Turkish exactions by way of tithes should appeal to the Kataba Civil Court. The revenues of such lands, *i.e.*, payment in kind, are of course paid to the Amir—the cultivator's overlord. If I can manage an interview the difficulty will be amicably solved. I have no doubt of this.

Inclosure 5 in No. 158.

Government of Bombay to Political Resident, Aden.

(Telegraphic.) *August 28, 1907.*

WHEN may Government expect further report promised in your letter dated the 13th July last.

Inclosure 6 in No 158.

Political Resident, Aden, to Government of Bombay.

(Secret.) *Aden Residency, September 1, 1907.*

WITH reference to your telegram dated the 28th August last, in which you inquire when Government may expect the further report promised in this Office letter dated the 13th July last, I have the honour to state that the correspondence in question is now under reference to the Political Agent, D'thala, and that the report will be furnished as soon as possible.

Inclosure 7 in No. 158.

Political Resident, Aden, to Government of Bombay.

(Secret.) *Aden Residency, September 8, 1907.*

WITH reference to correspondence ending with my letter dated the 1st instant, relative to the settlement of disputes and claims affecting Turkish subjects having interests on the British side of the demarcated frontier, and *vice versâ*, I have the honour to state that the Political Agent, D'thala, reports that although it was stated in paragraph 6 of the Aden Boundary Commission Secret despatch dated the 15th March, 1904, that

Amiri cultivation had in no instance been left on the Turkish side of the border, there are actually Amiri lands on the Turkish side which have been pointed out to him by the Amir in person.

2. With regard to these lands, he agrees that the jurisdiction would appear to be now Turkish, and that therefore if the Amiri cultivator has any cause of grievance in regard to tithes he should, *primâ facie*, seek his remedy in Turkish Courts. And he agrees that there should be a similar procedure in regard to Turkish lands which have drifted across to the Amiri side of the border.

3. He states, however, that neither party will agree to the transference of overlordship over the persons occupying such lands, and that it is such overlordship over persons that opens the door to the overlordship over revenues on such lands, which is referred to in paragraph 3 (2) of my letter dated the 13th July last.

4. Major Jacob agrees that private rights in land are not affected by the demarcation, and he states that both sides continue to enjoy all rights of real property, grazing, and water that they formerly enjoyed.

5. It is evident from his remarks that the Amir is himself anxious still to collect revenues from trans-frontier Amiri lands which are naturally lessened by any excess tithes collected on the same lands by Turkish authority. But Major Jacob repeats that the only remedy in such cases would lie in Turkish Courts. And, generally speaking, it would not appear that there is any real reason to modify the view already expressed in Government of India, Foreign Department, letter dated the 13th June last.

6. The attached copy of a translation of a document which was exchanged between the British and Turkish Commissioners regarding Haushabi-Kamaira lands seems to me to constitute a sufficient basis for the adjustment of whatever disputes may hereafter arise. And meanwhile I do not think that the Amir's claims to revenue rights over lands which are now situated on the Turkish side of the border are of a nature to merit our support.

Inclosure 8 in No. 158.

Document exchanged between British and Turkish Commissioners respecting non-interference with Rights of Real Property, Water, and Grazing on either side of the Boundary.

(Translation.)

THE work of delimitation between the two Governments does not imply any interference with the property rights of the inhabitants on either side of the boundary. In the future as in the past the inhabitants on the side of the (*e.g.*, Canton of Kamaira) shall continue to enjoy all rights of real property, pasturage, and water which they enjoyed on the (*e.g.*, Haushabi) side, and similarly the inhabitants on the (*e.g.*, Haushabi) side of the boundary shall continue to enjoy all rights of real property, grazing, and water that they formerly enjoyed on the (*e.g.*, Canton of Kamaira) side of the boundary; similarly all matters of "Wakf" will follow prescribed usage, free from any interference from either side.

Dated (Mahommedan and European date in Arabic).

(L.S.) (Signed) R. A. WAHAB, *Colonel, British Commissioner.*

(Seal of Turkish Commissioner.) MUSTAPHA REMZI BEY.

[40314] No. 159.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 9.)

(No. 731.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December 2, 1907.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 353 of the 28th August, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from His Majesty's Consul at Bussorah reporting his representations to the Vali on the subject of the lack of courtesy shown by the Kaimakam of Katif to British naval officers.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 159.

Consul Crow to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 71.)

Sir, *Bussorah, November 1, 1907.*

ON receipt to-day of your Excellency's despatch of the 8th October, concerning the discourteous treatment of British naval officers at Katif by the local authorities, I at once called on the Vali and asked him if he had received the despatch of the Minister of the Interior on the subject. It had not yet reached him.

I explained what had occurred, and translated to his Excellency the paragraphs of Lieutenant-Commander Gouldsmith's letter regarding the treatment he had received.

As instructed, I made it clear to him that His Majesty's Government would not tolerate such discourtesy to British naval officers, and I said that your Excellency desired me to point out that if the Kaimakam was not dismissed or very severely reprimanded, and compelled to apologize in a suitable manner, the matter would become serious.

His Excellency expressed his very keen regret that such an incident should have occurred. From Lieutenant-Commander Gouldsmith's letter it appeared to him that the captain of the port was chiefly to blame in the matter. He said there was no Kaimakam at Katif at the time, but a certain Avni Effendi was then in charge as Acting Kaimakam, with whom he was dissatisfied, and he had since been removed.

I remarked that the Acting Kaimakam was apparently cognizant of what was taking place, as he was in his house and close to the landing-stage, and the Commander of the "Lapwing" had received information that the officials who misbehaved themselves were acting under his orders. His Excellency promised to make a searching inquiry on receipt of the despatch of the Minister of the Interior, and assured me that the guilty parties would be punished.

I am sending the Vali a translation of the second and third paragraphs of Lieutenant-Commander Gouldsmith's letter, and will acquaint your Excellency with the steps taken by him on receipt of the despatch of the Minister of the Interior.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. B. CROW.

[40317] No. 160.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 9.)

(No. 735.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December 3, 1907.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 620 of the 25th September last, I have the honour to forward herewith a despatch from the Acting British Consul at Jeddah, reporting the return from the Yemen of the deputation of Ulemas from Mecca and the result of their mission to the Imam.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 160.

Acting Consul Mohammed Hussein to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 39.)

Sir, *Jeddah, November 11, 1907.*

WITH reference to this Consulate despatch No. 28 of the 12th September last, I have the honour to report that the deputation of the Mecca Ulemas, sent by the authorities of Hedjaz to the Imam of Yemen, returned to Jeddah on the 6th instant by the Khedivial mail-boat "Negeleh," and left the following day for Mecca.

Siddik Kamal Effendi, mufti of the Hanafi sect, who was a member of the deputation, died at Sanaa.

The Imam having refused to receive the deputation, it did not go beyond Sanaa, wherefrom a letter was sent to the Imam exhorting him to desist from further hostilities and to submit to the authority of the Turkish Government. The reply received from the Imam expressed his regret at the state of the country brought about

by the misrule of the Turkish officials in Yemen, and also stated that Ahmed Faizi Pasha was responsible for the recent troubles, as he violated the agreement arrived at between the Imam and the Turkish Governor-General of Yemen at the time of the surrender of Sanaa.

He ended his letter with the statement that, as long as his demands submitted to the Sultan were not accepted, there was no chance of peace in Yemen.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MOHAMMED HUSSEIN.

[40715] No. 161.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(Received December 12.)

Sir, *Admiralty, December 11, 1907.*

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a copy of correspondence which has been received from the Commander-in-chief, East Indies, respecting the insult offered to the Officer Commanding His Majesty's ship "Lapwing" at El Katif in June last.

Their Lordships are unaware what action may already have been taken in regard to this incident, but they strongly urge that steps may be taken to exact an adequate apology from the Turkish officials at El Katif for the affront to the Commanding Officer of His Majesty's ship "Lapwing."

A similar letter has been addressed to the India Office.

I am &c.
(Signed) C. I. THOMAS.

Inclosure 1 in No. 161.

Government of India to Commodore Sir G. Warrender.

(Confidential.)

Sir, *Simla, November 1, 1907.*

IN continuation of Marine Department letter dated the 4th October, 1907, I am directed to forward herewith a copy of a letter dated the 12th October, 1907, from Major P. Z. Cox, C.I.E., Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, and to request that the Government of India may be favoured at an early date with your Excellency's views on the recommendations made therein.

I have, &c.
(Signed) — ROBERTSON, *Deputy Secretary.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 161.

Major Cox to Government of India.

Sir, *Bushire, October 12, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to refer to the correspondence forwarded to me with Foreign Department indorsements marginally noted, in connection with the affront recently offered to the Commander of His Majesty's ship "Lapwing" by the Turkish authorities at El Katif.

2. I venture, with the highest respect, to observe that the course recommended by His Majesty's Secretary of State for India, and adopted by His Majesty's Minister for Foreign Affairs, seems mainly to animadvert upon the conduct of the Turkish Representative at El Katif as a procedure which "practically amounted to sheltering the pirate," Ahmed-bin-Salman, and no steps appear to have been authorized in the direction of obtaining any apology or reparation locally for the affront offered to the Commander of one of His Majesty's ships in person.

The intimate association which necessarily exists between the naval authorities and the Resident in the task of maintaining our prestige and influence in the Persian Gulf will, I hope, be accepted as my excuse or justification for expressing the feeling that the local aspect of a humiliating incident in this case hardly received the consideration which it deserved at the hands of His Majesty's Government.

As the Government of India are aware, in the course of official co-operation Commanders of His Majesty's ships are often called upon, in the interests of the service, to act emergently on requisitions from the Resident, in anticipation of the Admiral's concurrence.

The steps authorized by His Majesty's Government in the present case afford little or no practical guarantee to any one with local experience of Turkish methods in these waters that His Majesty's ship would not be treated with the same contumely if she were to visit El Katif again in the immediate future. I should certainly hesitate greatly to ask any Commander to place himself in such a position, and cannot doubt but that an officer with a humiliating and unexpiated experience in his mind such as that possessed by Commander Gouldsmith, of His Majesty's ship "Lapwing," would be extremely loth to repeat the experiment.

3. I venture, therefore, to respectfully ask the Government of India, in order that the dignity of their subsidized ships may be maintained, to consider the expediency of asking His Majesty's Government to induce the Porte to arrange for the accord of some overt local act of apology for the affront offered to His Majesty's ship "Lapwing."

I am unaware of the views which his Excellency the Naval Commander-in-chief may entertain on this point, but, subject to them, it would seem to me a convenient and suitable solution if the Vali of Bussorah were instructed by his Government to furnish an open letter to Lieutenant Commander Gouldsmith, containing peremptory orders to the offending official at El Katif to proceed on board His Majesty's ship "Lapwing" and offer a formal apology, both in writing and in person, for his previous discourtesy.

Inclosure 3 in No. 161.

Commodore Sir G. Warrender to Government of India.

Sir, *"Hyacinth," at Bombay, November 13, 1907.*

IN reply to your letter of the 1st instant, be pleased to acquaint his Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India in Council that I entirely concur in the suggestion of the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, and am forwarding a copy of the correspondence to the Admiralty, with a view to their Lordships supporting any representation the Indian Government may make to the incident.

I have, &c.

[40714] No. 162.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 12.)

Sir, *India Office, December 11, 1907.*

WITH reference to your letter, dated the 29th August last, inclosing a copy of a *note verbale* addressed to the Turkish Government as to the treatment of the officers of His Majesty's ship "Lapwing" by the Turkish authorities at Katif, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Morley to inclose, to be laid before Secretary Sir E. Grey, a copy of a telegram from the Government of India, dated the 2nd instant, together with a copy of Major Cox' letter therein referred to.

Mr. Morley is not aware that any action has as yet resulted from the presentation of the *note verbale* to the Turkish Government, and he concurs in thinking it highly desirable that the reparation to be made should, if possible, include some overt local act of apology for the affront offered.

I am therefore to suggest that, in view of the delay of the Turkish Government in replying to the note of the 19th August last, His Majesty's Ambassador might be instructed, if Sir E. Grey sees no objection, to inform the Turkish Government that His Majesty's Government will not consider the incident to be satisfactorily closed unless a formal apology be made by the local officials as recommended in paragraph 3 of Major Cox' letter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 162.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Telegraphic.) P. *December* 2, 1907.

THE Naval Commander-in-chief entirely concurs with the recommendation contained in paragraph 3 of Major Cox' letter of the 12th October last (forwarded by mail of the 31st October) as to the treatment in June last of His Majesty's ship "Lapwing" at Katif.

Inclosure 2 in No. 162.

Major Cox to Government of India, dated October 12, 1907.

[See Inclosure 2 in No. 161.]

[41012] No. 163.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 14.)

(No. 378.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, December* 14, 1907.

MAJOR COX thinks that the proceedings against the pirates (see my telegram No. 375 of the 14th instant) will not be complete unless the strongholds of the Chief of Dashti at Deyyir and Kangoon are destroyed. He now recommends that His Majesty's ships should do this—if possible, with the assent of the Persian Government; but, if necessary, without it.

Shall I approach the Persian Government? I might suggest that a Persian official could be present on board His Majesty's ship, if the "Persepolis" is unseaworthy and unable to accompany our ship as Cox suggests.

[41013] No. 164.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 14.)

(No. 379.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, December* 14, 1907.

RED oxide at Abu Musa.

On the 6th November the German Minister informed me of Wönckhaus' complaint of Sheikh's action in cancelling Concession, and I gave him a Memorandum explaining facts, and pointing out (see printed inclosures in your despatch No. 134 of the 7th August) that Wönckhaus' contract was invalid. On the 18th ultimo he informed me that he was awaiting a report from the German Consul at Bushire. No further communication from the German Legation has since been made to me.

The German Consul has, however, sent his dragoman to the Sheikh of Shargah, with a letter threatening to claim heavy indemnity on behalf of Wönckhaus, and refusing to recognize the cancellation of the Concession.

I am sending full report by next messenger. This move seems to be an ill-chosen attempt to dispute our position in the Persian Gulf.

I have requested Cox to tell the Sheikh to pay no attention to the German Consul's letter.

May I inform the German Chargé d'Affaires that, by the Protectorate Treaty of 1892, the Sheikh is precluded from entering into correspondence with any Government but the British, and request him to instruct his Consul accordingly?

[41053] No. 165.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 16.)

(No. 746. Confidential.)

Sir, *Pera, December* 5, 1907.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 712, Confidential, of the 25th ultimo, respecting a scheme for the construction of a ship canal between the Euphrates and

the Tigris near Faluja, and suggesting that the matter might be laid before some suitable British firm of engineers of good standing, I have the honour to report that M. Cugnin, the French engineer mentioned in the inclosure to my despatch, has now been dismissed by the Turkish Government and is now without employment. He has had considerable experience in Mesopotamia, and is keen and apparently capable. Should any British firm feel disposed to interest itself in the possibilities of the scheme suggested by Mr. Consul-General Ramsay, the present seems to offer an excellent opportunity to obtain a contoured survey and report of the surrounding country suitable for irrigation. His Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad could probably arrange with M. Cugnin to undertake the work on favourable terms, and thus supply valuable technical information at a minimum of expenditure on the part of the interested firm.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[41064] No. 166.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 16.)

(No. 760.)

Sir, *Pera, December* 10, 1907.

WITH reference to previous correspondence respecting the condition of the Bitlis Vilayet, I have the honour to transmit the accompanying copy of a further despatch from Mr. Vice-Consul Heard.

In this despatch Mr. Heard describes the state of affairs existing in the districts of Akhlat and Bulanik, which he had traversed on his way to Erzeroum, whither I had instructed him to proceed for special reasons. The situation in these districts appears to be no better than in the rest of the vilayet, and the impression produced by Mr. Heard's Report, and more especially by the general conclusions at which he has arrived as to the situation of the Armenians in the Vilayet of Bitlis, is most disheartening. As you are aware, I have repeatedly drawn the Grand Vizier's most serious attention to the deplorable condition of affairs in this vilayet, keeping him from time to time informed of the main features of the situation as described by Mr. Heard, and I shall not fail to communicate to him such parts of the present Report as I think right, making at the same time the most earnest representations that I can formulate. You will remember that the Memorandum containing the substance of Mr. Heard's despatches, which I communicated to the Grand Vizier, was laid before the Sultan, who authorized his Highness to take such measures as he deemed necessary for the relief of the distress in the vilayet, and for the improvement of the situation, and that his Highness sent instructions to carry out certain measures which I had suggested. I have asked Mr. Heard how far these measures have been executed, and I have not yet received his reply, but there is nothing in his subsequent telegrams or despatches which suggests that there has been any amelioration. Indeed, real improvement could only be brought about by a complete change of policy in high quarters, involving the repression of the Hamidie and a thorough reform of the administrative machinery.

The only hopeful feature of the situation is that the Government at last appears to be seriously concerned at the rebellious behaviour of the Kurds. In my despatch No. 707 of the 20th ultimo I reported that the Grand Vizier had informed me that it had been decided to adopt forcible measures against them, and I learn from Mr. Wilkie Young that in the Dersim district a number of the most notorious have been arrested.

As regards pecuniary relief for the winter, which, as Mr. Heard points out, is the most pressing need for the moment, I have, as you are aware, already called the attention of the heads of the British and Foreign Bible Society and the American Bible House to the distress prevailing in the vilayet, but, unfortunately, their appeal for assistance has so far met with but little response.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 166.

Vice-Consul Heard to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 19.)

Sir, *Erzeroum, November* 23, 1907.

I HAVE the honour to submit to your Excellency the following Report on my recent journey from Bitlis to Erzeroum, describing the condition of the districts of Akhlat and Bulanik :—

State of Akhlat.

In the former district I found all the manifold oppressions and abuses existent which have contributed to reduce the Armenian population of Bitlis to its present lamentable condition. The district appears to be more or less free from the Fedai and the particular type of Government persecution which their presence entails; on the other hand, the robberies of Hamidiehs and Circassians, especially during the past year, have greatly hastened their economic ruin.

I had understood that the once prosperous villages of Akhlat, a district famous for the superior quality of its white wheat, were in a somewhat better condition than that of the general average in the Bitlis Vilayet. If the six villages which I passed on my line of route are to be taken as typical of the rest, which I believe to be the case, I regret to state that this is not so.

Complaints of Villagers.

The following is a brief summary of the principal oppressions and injustices brought to my notice by the villagers :—

1. *Taxation.*—The simultaneous collection of several instalments at a time, instead of at regular intervals, appears to be responsible for much of the indebtedness which prevails. "Enjumn'at," or the collective payment of emigrants' military tax by the remainder of the population, seems to have been the rule here as everywhere else. Taxes have also increased of late years, in spite of the growing poverty. Thus the military exemption tax is stated to have risen from 40 to 54 piastres, the sheep tax from 3 to 4½ piastres, whilst the land tax is said to be increasing every year.

The small minority of fairly prosperous farmers have often to pay the taxes which can no longer be extracted from their destitute neighbours. Finally, I gathered that up to within quite a short time of my visit the tax collectors had been employing violence, and seizing the scanty stores of grain upon which many destitute families were relying to keep themselves from starvation.

2. The robberies of Hamidiehs and Circassians have been more frequent than ever this year. Nearly all the sheep have been taken, and the loss of plough oxen throws many farmers out of work. No protection is given by Government. All the villagers agreed that a big raiding party of Kurds and Circassians had only been prevented by the early arrival of snow from sweeping down on the defenceless Akhlat villagers shortly before my arrival.

3. The permanent quartering of detachments of zaptiehs or soldiers in the villages is also a heavy drain on their resources. The inhabitants of Gezvag complained that they have had to keep a "cordon" of six or seven zaptiehs for the last six years, which had cost them in all 12,000 piastres. Two months ago, whilst 300 sheep were being carried off by the Hamidieh, the "cordon" found the occasion suitable for holding a feast in the neighbouring village. Needless to say, the villagers have to supply chickens and other luxuries to their unwelcome guests under pain of being beaten. I believe, however, that the presence of troops does afford some protection from the raids of Kurds. The zaptiehs, on the contrary, seem to be quite useless.

4. Small robberies, "hafir" (or tribute) paid to local tyrants, injustice in the collection of the tithe, the constant billeting of officials and zaptiehs on their houses, forced labour and transport, insecurity of the fields, "selef," &c., were amongst the other numerous complaints common to nearly all the villages visited.

Destitute Condition of Armenians.

The number of houses in the six villages is stated to have decreased from 725 to 575 in the last five years. Only thirty-six independent farmers remain, with 226 "miribé," or "metayer" cultivators, that is to say, thirty-six houses are self-supporting, and have to bear the double burden of paying the taxes of others, and of assisting, as far as their decreasing means permit, in the maintenance of their starving fellow-villagers. It is obvious that this small remnant will not long be able to stand such a strain on their resources.

The 226 "miribés" may be said to be in a state of semi-ruin. As they are obliged to yield one-half of their produce to their employers, they have only the remaining half wherewith to withstand the inroads of the tax collectors and other robbers, and to provide for the needs of their families. As to the remaining 313 families, it is hard to say how they manage to exist. Some live from hand to mouth by doing odd jobs; others go and work for Circassians and Kurds for their keep. The majority seem to live chiefly on alms, and are already in a state of semi-starvation, some of them being in such a ragged condition that they are unable to meet the claims of decency. In Gezvag the Dragoman saw the five children of a destitute widow sitting stark naked round the embers of a dung fire. Such sights are common.

At Perkhus two young girls were about to sell themselves to the soldiers to save their family from starvation. I fortunately arrived in time to arrange for their being sent to the Head of their community in Bitlis, with a letter of recommendation, otherwise this shocking transaction would by now have been consummated.

The above are merely individual cases out of the thousands which might be cited to indicate the appalling state of misery and destitution which everywhere prevails, and of which it would be impossible for me to convey an adequate idea to your Excellency in the pages of an official report.

If the villagers are to be believed, the proportion of their harvest remaining over to them after they have met the various claims, legitimate or otherwise, which drain away the greater part of it, varies between 1*s.* 10*d.* and ½*d.*

Many families will desert their homes this winter, whilst others, fearing to face the terrors of the snow and frost, being destitute in many cases of adequate clothing and footgear, seemed doomed to a lingering death from starvation or physical exhaustion.

State of Bulanik.

In Bulanik I found the situation to be even more desperate than I had been led to believe from the various rumours which have been current in Bitlis for some time past. Although this district is neither remote nor inaccessible, being for the most part level country traversed in all directions by easy roads, I would venture to say that greater anarchy prevails there at present than in almost any other part of Kurdistan. The Hamidié are pillaging whole villages, and driving out the inhabitants, whilst minor robberies and acts of violence seem to be of daily occurrence all over the kaza. Kurds, Circassians, and "Muhajirs," or immigrants from Russia, all unite in preying upon the miserable Armenians, who receive absolutely no protection. Indeed, the local Government seem to be entirely paralyzed, in view of the well-known immunity of the Hamidiehs. If the villagers petition the local authorities about the latter, they are referred to Nazim Bey, the Hamidieh Commandant at Gop, who, they complain, merely drives them away with insults. The latter, who appears to be a sort of Zekki Pasha *in petto*, is reported by every one to be hand-in-glove with all the Hamidieh Chiefs, who allow him a share of their booty, or at any rate pay him heavy bribes, whereby he has acquired great wealth.

I spent only two days in Bulanik, during which time I was prevented from visiting any villages off the line of route, owing to the recent heavy snow fall. During this short period, however, I was assailed on all sides with loud complaints against the unrestrained lawlessness of the Hamidieh, against whom all classes of the population seem to be exasperated to the last degree. To give a few examples :—

At Mokhig, a Kurdish nyah village, the Mouhtar loudly complained against the depredations of the Hamidiehs, saying that after the tithe had been collected the latter were accustomed to levy double the same amount as their due. He earnestly besought me to request my Government to do something to restrain them. A poor Hamidieh, who was present, declared that they were ruining the country, and that all the wealth was being taken by the man who owned a horse and gun (he himself possessing neither). An aged Kurd, who also appeared, declared that he did not dare to go to market to sell his corn for fear of having the coat stripped from his back. "The man with the gun, he is the master of the country," he exclaimed. At Yonjalu I noticed that my escort were whispering with the Armenians, who had collected round me to make known their wrongs. Thinking that, as usual, they were trying to intimidate them and prevent

their telling the truth, I inquired what they had said. It turned out that they were urging the villagers to tell me everything they knew about the Hamidiehs, against whom they also nursed a deep resentment. Even the Hamidiehs themselves in some cases seem to think that things are going too far. A certain Aga, in whose house I spent the night, said, to my surprise, that he was not content with the Government. "The Hamidieh are all robbers," he said, "and ought to be hanged." "In that case you also should be hanged," I observed. He admitted this with a grin, but persisted in his unfavourable comments on the Government. His attitude of mind was peculiar, but he was obviously sincere in his dislike of the present state of affairs. In another Hamidieh village, which did not enjoy the advantage of a powerful protector, the inhabitants also seem discontented, and said that they had been robbed and had got no redress from Government. In short, I do not think it an exaggeration to say that all classes of the population, including certain of the Hamidiehs themselves, regard the present situation as intolerable.

The following are some of the most recent robberies perpetrated by the Hamidieh which were brought to my notice in Bulanik:—

Teghud.—220 sheep and many buffaloes carried off by Colonel Khalid Bey four months ago.

Ogchin.—Entirely robbed by Major Riza and Mehmed Saïd two months ago. Now deserted.

Baichabkhu.—One house robbed, one man killed one month ago.

Yonjalu.—One shop and five houses robbed by Majors Suleiman and Riza. Forty-five cattle also taken.

Latar.—Entirely pillaged by Suleiman and Kuli one month ago. Villagers fled to Kekerlu.

Goghag.—Entirely robbed by Sheikhs of Goghag and one Haider Jibranli last summer.

Hamza Sheikh.—Seven houses looted by Khalid Bey.

Shirvan Sheikh.—Ruined by Colonel Khalid Bey, who used to take £ T. 100 and 200 kile of corn as annual tribute.

Adgon.—Two men murdered two months ago, and deserted in consequence.

As I had the honour to state in my telegram of the 21st November, the local authorities are quite powerless to prevent these disorders, the blame resting wholly with the Central Government, which, for reasons best known to itself, allows the Hamidieh complete liberty to despoil the defenceless population. Occasionally the arrest of some notorious Bey is ordered, but as it is not carried out, the position is only made worse than before. As the Kaïmakam of Gop explained to me, sometimes a captain will be sent to arrest some Hamidieh Chieftain, and is confronted by an armed savage calling himself colonel, adorned, it may be, with the insignia of the Imperial favour, whereupon the officer withdraws after formally making known the object of his visit to his "superior officer."

Two months ago a battalion was sent to arrest the notorious Riza Bey, the "Major" responsible amongst other misdeeds for a vile outrage committed on three small girls at Khanoghlu last May. (The matter was reported at the time by Mr. Safrastian to His Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum.) The Major refused to be arrested, and the battalion withdrew. A more recent attempt met with no greater success. This truculent Chieftain is commonly reported to have said that if the Sultan ordered him to come he would not obey.

Nothing would be easier than to suppress the Hamidieh, once it were understood that the Government was in earnest. I am convinced that, with a comparatively small force, the whole horde could be reduced to order almost without firing a shot. As it is obvious, however, that the Government surveys their misdeeds with a benevolent eye they profit by their license to the utmost, and have practically ruined Bulanik, Akhlat, and, I believe, part of Melasgerd in a comparatively short space of time. The Kaïmakam of Gop told me that he recently took one of these Hamidieh brigands to task for some robbery he had committed. The latter calmly replied, "Why shouldn't we rob? The Government does not prevent us."

The results of this reign of rapine and pillage are painfully obvious as one passes through the district. I was given a list of twenty-six Armenian villages, the number of houses in which had been reduced from 3,890 to 968 in the last five years. These figures are given with the usual reservations, but even if the number of surviving houses be doubled or even trebled the decrease is sufficiently striking. Many villages appear

to have been entirely deserted. The depopulation is compensated for to a certain extent by the settlement of Kurds, Circassians, and "Mouhajirs," of whom a great number appear to have been introduced during the last two years. They inhabit, of course, the deserted houses of Armenians. The latter complain greatly of the robberies and oppressions of these strangers, though these cannot compare in extent with the wholesale raiding of the Hamidiehs.

If the wealth thus seized were employed to any useful purpose, the attitude of the Government would be in some slight degree comprehensible. Apart, however, from the very great decrease in the tithe of late years due to the ruin of the agricultural element, it must be remembered that sheep seized by the Hamidieh pay practically no tax, and that the wealth they acquire is spent chiefly on arms and ammunition, or, as it is alleged, I believe with truth, in paying enormous bribes to those who protect them. They will pay absurd prices for rifles, and Mauser ammunition fetches from 3 to 5 piastres per cartridge "in war time."

Other Abuses.

In addition to the raiding of the Hamidieh, the Armenians in Bulanik complain of the usual injustices and oppressions prevalent in other parts of the vilayet. Amongst these are "hafir," forced labour, murders, violations, forced conversions to Islam, extortionate taxation, "selef," &c. Indeed, in whatever portion of the district I find myself, the same complaints are reiterated with monotonous regularity.

I could supply a large number of names of Moslem oppressors, against whom I heard complaints from all sides, with accounts of their misdeeds. Under the circumstances, however, it seems quite useless to bring them to the notice of the authorities until the Central Government shows signs of changing its present attitude.

Interview with the Kaïmakam of Gop.

The Kaïmakam of Gop, who showed me great courtesy during my stay there, appeared to me to be an official of the usual "Mektebli" class, of moderate intelligence, and no great administrative ability. He is new to the post, and has apparently not yet fallen under the influence of Nazim Bey and the Hamidieh party, as he may do later on. I heard no particular complaints against him, except that he was powerless to maintain order or afford protection to the people.

Though reticent at first, he later spoke more freely, and gave me to understand that the prevention of the Hamidiehs' excesses depended not on himself, but on Nazim Bey, the Hamidieh Commandant. It was accordingly quite impossible to bring them to book for their crimes. He assured me, however, that he made full reports on everything that occurred to the Mutessarif of Mush. I told him I was glad to hear this, as I understood that many officials contented themselves with reporting that "under the Imperial shadow perfect tranquillity prevails." He thereupon informed me that he also was accustomed to send this message, though he dispatched simultaneously reports describing the true state of affairs. I observed that it was possible that an unscrupulous Governor might forward the one and suppress the other, to which he replied that this message was always sent to soothe the feelings of the Government, and meant no more than that the Empire was not engaged in war. It was not required by regulations, he said, but by custom. "It is a sort of 'dalgavouklik'" (conjuring trick), he added, with an expressive gesture. I venture to repeat his remarks on the above subject, as they throw some light on the peculiar ways of Ottoman officialdom.

Destitution in Bulanik.

As to the extent of the destitution which at present exists, and the probable number of persons who will die of starvation before next harvest, it is extremely difficult to form even an approximate estimate. On the one hand, one must take into consideration the fact that, even in the days of comparative prosperity, the Armenian villages in Bitlis have always been remarkable for the squalor of the houses and the ragged and poverty-stricken appearance of the inhabitants. One might therefore be misled by external appearances into believing the people to be much poorer than they really are. Moreover, the Armenians are, it is unnecessary to state, extremely prone to invent and exaggerate in describing their grievances. On the other hand, one cannot fail to observe that their statements agree almost unanimously as to the main causes which have contributed to their ruin, and it is obvious that these tendencies if indefinitely

prolonged, must eventually lead to complete destitution. My experience is based on visits paid to some sixty villages in the Bitlis Vilayet, and in practically every one there exists a large number of paupers whose future is precarious in the extreme. It is well known that the Armenians have an extraordinary faculty for managing to survive where a less enduring race would fail in the struggle for existence.

There is a limit, however, to human endurance, and I think that to say that many hundreds must die this winter unless external assistance is given to them is not an exaggeration. I have no hesitation in saying that at the present moment there are thousands who are living on the border-line of starvation.

In one village, now chiefly occupied by aliens, a Circassian Bey, in describing the condition of the Armenians, whom he had no particular reason to regard with favour, remarked: "I rob them, the Kurds rob them, the Government robs them, and, by Allah, I know that many of them will die this winter from lack of bread." He complained, too, of the great numbers of starving wretches who were besieging his doors.

The great exodus of ruined Armenians from Mush appears to have already begun, Finding the state of Bulanik as bad as, if not worse, than that of their own district, such as go north pass on into Khinis, and many attempt to escape into Russia. As I understand them, the orders of the Government are that these wanderers are to be arrested, imprisoned, and sent back to their villages. As the Kaïmakam of Gop observed, "They have no bread, but the Government orders us to send them back to their homes." The Mutessarif of Khinis also informed me of this, though he gave me to understand that the order was not always carried out. The question, in my humble opinion, is of some importance. The number of persons concerned is very large, and those who are forcibly restored to their desolate homes cannot fail to die of starvation in large numbers. There seems, indeed, to be no road by which these wretched people can escape their fate.

With regard to my sources of information, I may state briefly that they consisted of the Abbot and certain other persons at the Monastery of Surp Daniel in Bulanik, the Reis and several notables of Gop, and the inhabitants of ten villages through which I passed. I also picked up some information from various officials and Moslems I encountered on my journey.

The failure of the Russian emigration scheme, which the Armenians regarded as their last hope, is responsible for much of the distress in this, as in other districts. Many villages did little sowing in spring, expecting that the autumn would see them in Russia. Consequently, it is said, many lacked seed corn for the autumn sowing, and had to become "miribés," thus losing their position as independant farmers. It is also stated that the Moslems who lent them seed on the "miribé" system have in some cases claimed three-quarters instead of half of their crops. I cannot say if this is the case, but there is nothing to prevent their taking the whole of it if they choose.

I have constantly heard it repeated that many of the Armenians, who would otherwise have already left their homes, are staying on in the belief that the Powers are going to introduce reforms and establish foreign control next year. There are also wild rumours circulating both amongst Moslems and Christians to the effect that England and Russia are going to occupy this part of the country—the foundation for this report being, I imagine, the recent Anglo-Russian Convention.

General Conclusions.

Summarizing briefly the situation of the Armenians in the Vilayet of Bitlis, I humbly venture to bring to your Excellency's notice the following main conclusions at which I have arrived as the result of such information as I have been able to acquire on the subject:—

1. The present condition of the Bitlis Armenians is not merely a distressing phase in the history of the Armenian question, it is the beginning of the end, their dissolution as a racial entity being now within sight.

2. Their miserable state is the cumulative effect of years of systematic oppression, such as finds no parallel in the neighbouring Vilayets of Diarbekir, Mamouret-ul-Aziz, and Erzeroum.

3. It would now be almost impossible to restore them to a position of economic independence, as the vast majority have either lost their lands or are so hopelessly involved in debt that their complete ruin is only a matter of time.

4. Such reforms as might have saved them five or even three years ago would now be useless. Nothing short of European control, or, what amounts to the same

thing, a complete reversal of the policy which has hitherto been responsible for their ruin, could arrest their downward course.

5. Even if a sincere desire existed on the part of the Central Government to introduce such drastic reforms as would be required to meet the needs of the situation, the local administration is so inefficient and corrupt, and local influences are so overwhelmingly hostile, that it would be almost impossible to have them carried out. The most urgent need for reform is in the administrative machinery itself.

6. The entire Armenian population in Bitlis would emigrate to-morrow if some land of refuge could be found for it. Though ardently attached to their homes, the Armenians have now realized that they are doomed to extinction if they remain, and as, with the exception of the favoured few who are enabled to escape to America, they are debarred from emigration. There is no choice left for them but to wander forth as beggars, which they are now doing in increasing numbers.

7. The most pressing matter at the present moment is the provision of relief to help them to survive the winter. Next year those in need of relief will probably be more numerous than they are now, unless some great change takes place in the situation, which grows worse every year.

8. There seems to be a disposition on the part of many of them to embrace Islam,

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. B. HEARD.

[41341] No. 167.

Mr. Marling to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 17.)

(No. 387.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, December 17, 1907.*

I INQUIRED of His Majesty's Consul-General at Bushire as to foundation for statement in Reuter's telegram respecting seizure of a warehouse on Abu Musa Island, the alleged property of Messrs. Wönckhaus, and he replies to-day as follows:—

"There are two small mud-huts on island, the property of British concessionnaire. His Majesty's ship 'Lapwing' seized neither of these; there are no warehouses of any kind there."

[40714] No. 168.

Sir Edward Grey to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 507.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December 17, 1907.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatches No. 521 of the 21st August and No. 731 of the 2nd instant, I transmit to you the accompanying copies of correspondence, as marked in the margin,* on the subject of the action of the local Ottoman authorities on the occasion of the visit of His Majesty's ship "Lapwing" to El Katif in pursuit of the pirate Ahmed-bin-Selman.

In view of the delay of the Ottoman Government in replying to your note of the 19th August, I have to request that your Excellency will address a further communication to them stating that His Majesty's Government will not be able to consider the incident satisfactorily closed unless a formal apology is made by the offending officials to the Commander of His Majesty's ship "Lapwing" for the affront to which he was subjected under circumstances which have already been explained.

It is accordingly desirable that the Vali of Bussorah should be instructed by his Government to furnish an open letter to Lieutenant-Commander Gouldsmith, containing peremptory orders to the local officials at El Katif to proceed on board His Majesty's ship "Lapwing," at such a date and hour as may prove convenient to the Officer in Command, and tender a former apology, both in writing and in person, for their previous misconduct.

I am, &c.
(Signed) E. GREY.

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* Nos. 161 and 162.

[41360] No. 169.

Count de Salis to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 18.)

(No. 548.)

Sir, *Berlin, December 16, 1907.*

THE German press are beginning to take considerable interest in the alleged interference in the Persian Gulf with the rights of certain German traders on the part of a British gun-boat, and some of the papers remark sarcastically that this incident is a very pretty example of the friendly relations that have been so much talked of between the two countries. I have the honour to inclose a translation of a letter, published in the "Berliner Neueste Nachrichten," from the firm of Traun, Stürken, and Co. Herr Stürken, who belongs to the firm of Wönckhaus, who are the traders in question, gives an account of what happened according to his information. The "North German Gazette" has not referred in any way to the matter, but the "Cologne Gazette" has published a telegram from Berlin which seems to be accepted by the press as being semi-official, translation of which I have also the honour to inclose.

I have, &c.
(For Count de Salis),
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 169.

Extract of Letter published in the "Berliner Neueste Nachrichten" of December 13, 1907.

(Translation.)

THE English gun-boat "Lapwing" brought an Arab Sheikh from the Pirate Coast to Bu-Musa and conveyed the coolies of the firm of Wönckhaus by force back to the Persian mainland. This Arab Sheikh for his part stopped the work in the oxide mines, for which the firm holds contracts from the legitimate owners, which were concluded during my stay in the Gulf last year, and drove away the agents of the firm with gun-shots. The object is to get the oxide business into English hands and to deprive the Hamburg-America Line of the freight. For this the English require a third party, viz., the alleged independent Arab Sheikh, who is nothing but an instrument in the hands of his English protectors. While the English press have been lately emphasizing the equal treatment of German trade and German shipping in Mesopotamia, this campaign against a successful German undertaking was carried out under the Arabian flag. The consequence will be a loss, firstly, to the rich native owner of the oxide mines, and, secondly, to German shipping and German trade.

Inclosure 2 in No. 169.

Telegram in the "Cologne Gazette" of December 13, 1907.

(Translation.)

FOR some time past English firms have exploited the oxide mines on the islands of the Persian Gulf, and recently the German firm of Wönckhaus and Co. have secured the right to work an oxide mine by leasing an island from a certain Sheikh. It is not impossible that this competition became inconvenient to the English firms who previously possessed a monopoly of this article, and it is therefore not unlikely that they encouraged another Sheikh to advance a claim to the possession of the island; but it is also possible that the Sheikh thought of the matter of his own accord. Whatever the reason may be, he landed with his followers and demanded that the employés of Messrs. Wönckhaus and Co. should leave the island, in which they had no right. These people, among whom there was no European, appear to have submitted to the Sheikh's demand without opposition. Nothing is known here of the report that a British ship of war took part in the seizure of the island, and it would seem more probable that the undertaking was carried out by the Sheikh and his followers alone.

As yet there does not appear to be any ground for diplomatic action with the British Government on the part of Germany, but the German authorities are now busy in endeavouring to discover the real facts of the case. It will depend upon them

what steps, if any, should be taken. It will be understood that this cannot be done in a moment, owing to the remote situation of the island and the complicated condition of titles to property in those parts, and therefore a certain amount of delay must elapse before the facts of the matter are clearly established. It is perfectly true that the German Government pursue no political interests in the Persian Gulf, and the rumour that Germany intends to establish a coaling station on the island in question is entirely without foundation. Messrs. Wönckhaus' undertaking is of a purely commercial nature, and as such they are entitled to the support of the State in the manner in which every State supports its subjects so long as their claims are justifiable.

[41459] No. 170.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(Received December 18.)

Sir, *India Office, December 18, 1907.*

WITH reference to the telegram No. 379 of the 14th instant from His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran regarding Abu Musa Island, I am directed to say that Mr. Secretary Morley concurs in the terms of the telegram of instructions which the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs proposes to send in reply.

As regards the question of policy involved, Mr. Morley considers it of importance that the controversy which may perhaps be inevitable with the German Government should, as far as possible, be minimized. He would suggest that it should be made clear to Germany at the earliest convenient occasion that the action taken by His Majesty's Government has been solely with a view to maintaining the Sheikh's authority, which we have recognized by Treaty Agreements with him, and not with any object of excluding foreign enterprise—a course that would be inconsistent with the principle of the "open door," on which the whole policy of His Majesty's Government in these regions is based.

The proceedings of the single concessionnaire who, independently of his other partners in the Concession, executed the contract with Messrs. Wonckhaus, were of a kind fully to justify the Sheikh in cancelling the Concession with a view to the maintenance of his authority. Germany might further be informed that, when the questions connected with the cancellation have been settled, there will be no objection on the part of His Majesty's Government to the Sheikh making suitable arrangements for the exploitation of the oxide, provided that he grants no monopoly.

With reference to the advice given to the Sheikh by the Resident at the request of the Chargé d'Affaires—advice marked by a slightly undiplomatic crudity of expression—to pay no attention to the representations of the German Consul-General, Mr. Morley, in order to anticipate any complaint by the German authorities of improper behaviour on the part of the Sheikh, would suggest that it should be explained that the reason of the Sheikh's silence is that he has been informed by the British authorities that, in accordance with the provisions of our Treaty engagements with him, the matter will be discussed by us on his behalf with the German authorities.

I am, &c.
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

[41859] No. 171.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 23.)

(No. 764.)

Sir, *Pera, December 12, 1907.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 745 of the 4th instant, referring to the visit of the Abyssinian Mission, I have the honour to report that General Mashashia, the head of the Mission, called on me this morning to explain the nature of his demands in connection with the Der-es-Sultan at Jerusalem. After going into the previous history of the question with a view to showing that the Abyssinians had been dispossessed by the Copts, he claimed the right for the Abyssinians, once they had been given access to the Der-es-Sultan, to build a chapel and celebrate mass therein, and complained that the Copts prevented them exercising such rights. I informed General Mashashin that I was unacquainted with the detailed past history of the question, but that I had understood that the matter had been definitely settled last

year, as a result of the General's visit, by reopening a door in order to give the Abyssinians access to the Monastery as demanded by them, and that consequently these fresh demands seemed to go beyond the Agreement already arrived at. The General declared that an impartial examination of the past history and merits of the question would show clearly that the Copts were unjustified in their attitude, to which I replied that the Copts had also acquired rights in the matter which could not be ignored. The General expressed the hope that our championship of the cause of the Copts would not blind us to the true merits of the question, judged impartially. I informed the General that there could be no question of our taking a one-sided view of the matter, especially in view of the very friendly and excellent relations existing between his Sovereign's country and the British Government, but that I could hold out no hope of our approving of the discussion being now reopened.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

[41867] No. 172.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 23.)

(No. 772.)
Sir, *Constantinople, December 18, 1907.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 700 of the 19th ultimo, I have the honour to forward herewith three despatches from His Majesty's Consular officer at Erzeroum, reporting on the steps taken by the Ottoman authorities to restore order in that vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure 1 in No. 172.

Acting Consul Young to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 76.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, November 22, 1907.*

REFERRING to the recent disturbances in the Dersim, reported in the inclosure in my No. 63 of the 15th October, I have the honour to submit to your Excellency the following extracts from a private letter (dated Kharput, the 9th November) which has just reached me from a very reliable source:—

"You probably remember Samih Bey, President of the Court of Appeal—a man of rare honesty and uprightness. You also know something about the Charsanjak Beys. For the first time in their lives the latter have had an experience of prison life." Samih Bey having condemned them, in spite of powerful opposition, to fifteen years. "They have frequently been called to Kharput, but hitherto have been allowed to rent their own quarters. This time they have been in prison during their trial. Now that they have received their sentence, their friends are doing all they can against Samih Bey, although the sentence, if strict justice were administered, would be hanging. They have been guilty of crimes innumerable—murders, wars among themselves, outrages upon girls, &c.

"If you can call attention to this hostility to the Judge, which has become very violent, I think it would be a kindness not only to an excellent man but to the vilayet; for there is no man who enjoys the confidence of the people so fully as he. Even now that the Beys are in prison, their sons and wives continue the policy of the past."

It is satisfactory to learn from an independent source that the Ottoman authorities are taking measures, and that at least some of the Beys are in prison at last; but, in view of powerful local intrigues, which are sure to be brought to bear in order to secure their release and to injure the Judge who condemned them, it is much to be hoped that the Central Government will lose no time in making clear their approval of the steps which have already been taken, and their determination to support the local authorities in a strong and consistent policy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. E. WILKIE YOUNG.

Inclosure 2 in No. 172.

Acting Consul Young to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 77.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, November 23, 1907.*

REFERRING to several despatches which I have had the honour to address to your Excellency since the incident of the 9th September with regard to the urgent need of strong measures for the maintenance of order in this district, I have the satisfaction to report that within the past few days upwards of twenty arrests have been made; and the Vali, Abdul Wahab Pasha, assured me this afternoon of his determination to continue to pursue a firm and consistent policy in this matter. Troops are patrolling the streets to-day; but, as was anticipated, perfect order prevails, and the impression produced in the city is good.

Whatever Abdul Wahab Pasha's record at other posts, he has begun well in Erzeroum; and it is to be hoped he will continue to deserve the influential support at Constantinople which on several occasions he has somewhat pointedly assured me of his anxiety to secure.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. E. WILKIE YOUNG.

Inclosure 3 in No. 172.

Vice-Consul Shipley to Sir N. O'Conor.

(No. 79.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, December 2, 1907.*

WITH reference to Mr. Wilkie Young's despatch No. 77 of the 23rd ultimo, and to my telegram of the 25th of the same month on the subject of the arrest by the Government of certain prominent Mussulman citizens of this town on the charge of being connected with the disturbed state of affairs prevalent in this city for some time past, I have the honour to report to your Excellency that numerous further arrests have been made during the past week, bringing, it is computed, the number of Mussulmans now in prison under the above charge to between fifty and sixty.

Most of these persons belong to the poorer class of shopkeepers or artisans, but among the more prominent—all of whom are alleged to have been members of the "Comité"—I may mention the following:—

1. Seifullah Effendi: A wealthy and leading lawyer of Erzeroum.
2. Hadji Shevket (Ulema): Alleged to have made violent attacks on the Government in the mosque during Ramazan and of inciting to rebellion.
3. Faroukh Bey: Formerly an army contractor. Accused of being implicated in the murder of Krikor Effendi, the details of which were given by Mr. Young in his despatch No. 58 of the 11th September last.
4. Dourak Bey: A member of the Erzeroum Municipality.
5. (Uzun) Osman Effendi: Late Mudir of the Agricultural Bank. Accused of want of respect towards the Government.
6. Hadji Akif Effendi: Alleged to have taken a leading part in movement of last year.
7. Sheikh Ahmed Effendi: A large exporter of sheep and cattle. Accusation against him similar to that against Osman Effendi.
8. Izzet Effendi: Accused of directly instigating murder of Krikor and of desiring to compass the death of his brother Towfik Bey, the partner of Krikor. His (Izzet Effendi's) father is said to be the most wealthy man in Erzeroum.

A perusal of the above list, comprising as it does some of the leading and most wealthy members of the Mussulman community, suffices to show that the Government has been no respecter of persons, and that once it had decided to act it has not been lacking in the requisite energy. Moreover, the attitude of the soldiers intrusted with the duty of effecting these arrests was, I am told, such as to make it very clear that at all costs they intended to obey the orders they had received, with the result, as had been predicted all along by those well qualified to judge, that not only were the arrests quietly acquiesced in by the Mussulman population, but that no counter-demonstration of any kind has since been attempted by the latter. One person only—a certain Meyloud Agha—was foolish enough at the time of his arrest to fire

on the soldiers, with the result that the latter promptly returned the fire, and that his house was broken into and he himself and his wife somewhat severely wounded. It is, however, necessary to remark, as bearing on the question, how far the Government can rely on the troops that the soldiers effecting these arrests were, as stated in my telegram above referred to, not drawn from the Erzeroum garrison, but from the battalions recently imported from Karahissar.

The energy displayed by the authorities has so far undoubtedly had a most salutary effect, and it must be said that some such lesson was needed if, as has on several occasions been pointed out to your Excellency by Mr. Wilkie Young, affairs at Erzeroum were not to degenerate into a state under which all government would become impossible.

At the beginning of last year it was difficult to withhold a certain sympathy from the Mussulmans in their efforts to redress the grievances under which they were labouring, and on the whole these efforts, with the notable exception of the murder of the police officials in October last, were conducted with a show of legality and with due regard for the maintenance of public security. But, and notwithstanding the abolition of the taxes complained of and the very ample concessions made to them by the Government, as reported in my telegram to your Excellency of the 26th March last, the policy pursued during the past five or six months by the members of the so-called "Comité" would by its vexatious, and in many cases entirely unwarranted, interference in the most petty details of administration, appear to have had no other object than to irritate the Government as much as possible without any benefit to themselves.

How far the leaders of the movement may be responsible for this mistaken policy I am unable to say, and, if my information be correct, in certain instances, such as the murder of Krikor, a strong protest was made by certain among their number against the course about to be adopted. In any case, however, the consequences are likely to be serious to themselves, as the present attitude of the Government is not such as to lead to the belief that it will show much consideration for those whom it suspects of being the original cause of the revolt against its authority last year, especially as it is considered by no one that any resistance will be met with on the part of the population so long, as at present seems to be the case, as the authorities can rely on the support of the military.

The town remains quiet, but I have observed among the Christians a certain uneasiness with regard to future possible developments, and especially as to whether they may not, under some pretext or other, be drawn into the matter by the Government. I do not at present see any ground for this uneasiness on their part, which appears to me to proceed chiefly from a sense of their defenceless position.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

[42290] No. 173.

M. Geoffray to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 27.)

Ambassade de France, Londres, le 24 Décembre, 1907.

M. le Secrétaire d'État,

J'AVAIS transmis le 13 Août dernier à M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères le Mémorandum, en date du 6 Août dernier, par lequel votre Excellence répondait à la note que M. Paul Cambon avait remise au Foreign Office le 16 Avril précédent relativement à l'application de la sentence arbitrale du 22 Août, 1905, concernant les boutres Mascatais.

En réponse à cette communication, M. Pichon vient de me faire savoir qu'il est d'accord avec votre Excellence sur tous les points énumérés dans ce Mémorandum et que le Gouvernement de la République reconnait formellement l'interprétation donnée dans ce document à la clause relative au droit d'accorder son pavillon aux Mascatais au service des Français résidant dans l'Oman.

M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères ajoute qu'il a invité le Consul de France à Mascate à se conformer aux prescriptions résultant de cet accord. M. Laronce s'est aussitôt mis à la disposition du Major Grey pour régler avec lui les détails du régime définitif des boutres. Je serais obligé à votre Excellence de vouloir bien faire parvenir

[42462] No. 173*.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 29.)

(No. 178.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Pera, December 29*, 1907.

HIS Majesty's Consul at Aleppo telegraphs as follows (received to-day): —

"Hamidiés have attacked, robbed, and severely wounded Mr. David Fraser, a British journalist, at a spot eight hours distant from Harran towards the east, beyond Aleppo Vilayet. Mr. Fraser was travelling along the line of the projected railway to Mosul. He has now been brought by the authorities to Urfa, where he is receiving care and proper medical attendance.

"Gendarmes and troops are actively engaged in the pursuit of the assailants."

I have sent following reply:—

"I presume that, as Mr. Fraser's assailants are Hamidiés, the Vali will concert measures with the military authorities at Diarbekir to secure their capture. I am making a strong representation to the Porte, insisting on the local authorities being supported by them in this matter."

à cet Agent les directions nécessaires pour que l'affaire dont il s'agit puisse recevoir la solution qu'un accord définitif rend désormais facile.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) GEOFFRAY.

[42479] No. 174.

Sir N. O'Conor to Sir Edward Grey.—(Received December 30.)

(No. 786. Confidential.)

Sir, *Constantinople, December 24, 1907.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a Confidential Memorandum from His Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad.

I have, &c.
(Signed) N. R. O'CONOR.

Inclosure in No. 174.

Memorandum by Consul-General Ramsay.

(No. 11. Confidential.)

1. *Nazim Pasha and his Commission.*- Speculation is rife as to the reasons which caused the appointment of the Commission. Some say that the object is to silence the complaints of the European Powers regarding the insecurity that is common to all parts of this country; others think that Germany has prompted measures which may render the provision of kilometric guarantees more easy.

When I called on Nazim Pasha, I told him that I had served for some years in a tribal country, and had also seen something of a country which had been changed from a desert to a rich province by means of irrigation. I offered to give him, or obtain for him, any information in my power. He asked many intelligent questions about the Indian frontier system of Government, the method of administering the country with the help of the tribal leaders, and the system of taking revenue, and seemed much interested in the answers I gave. I said that he could easily go to India and see things for himself, and that I was sure that the Government of India would be glad to assist him. He said that he could not do so without sanction from Constantinople, and that he would think about asking for this. He may be really thinking of this, as he has mentioned the conversation in subsequent meetings of the Commission. He does not seemed inclined to do anything in a hurry, and is first giving his attention to the measures required to increase the security in the country. One of the chief aims of the Commission is, I understand, to sell the Government lands and induce private individuals to improve them, but this he finds he cannot do unless he can assure would-be buyers that they can safely visit and cultivate the lands they buy; this, I think, is the chief reason why he lays so much stress on pacifying the country. When he returned my call, the only point of Indian administration to which he referred was the maintenance of law and order.

The Commission has been reinforced by the addition of a number of local members, and these seem to be fairly well chosen.

Most people seem convinced that the Commission has no authority to sell Government lands to foreigners. To ascertain the views of the Commission on this subject a British merchant here is going to ask whether he can buy any of the State land.

2. *Mosul.*—In a private letter to me from Mosul, Dr. Griffiths wrote: "On hearing this (*i.e.*, that a British Vice-Consul was appointed to Mosul), the Wali remarked to the French Consul, 'If this be true, it is the worst possible thing for me.' He dreads the growth of English influence here, and has probably been sent to stop it."

3. *Turkish Army.*—The Military Attaché has for some time been asking me to send him information about the Turkish army in this part of the country. I could not believe the figures that were collected for me, but at last I have succeeded in getting a copy of the last quarterly Return, prepared in the Commander-in-chief's office. I am having the information tabulated and recast, and hope to submit it next week. I have no reason to suppose that the information now given me is incorrect. When it comes, however, to reporting on the qualifications of Turkish officers, I am at a disadvantage.

In the first place, I do not talk Turkish, and, in the second place, I do not think that any Turkish officers would be allowed to be on anything like friendly terms with me.

4. *Sir William Wilcocks.*—Mr. Cree, of Bagdad, is a kind of local agent and informant of Sir William. He told me on the 24th November that he had just heard from Sir William that he was now in better health, and that he proposed to visit Bagdad next spring. He seemed to think that Sir William would have no difficulty in raising the money required for his scheme, but I do not know if this was his personal opinion or that of Sir William Wilcocks.

5. *Lynch's Steamers.*—Now that Lynch has permission to run a third steamer there is no reserve streamer at Bussorah. I understand that Mr. Parry, the local Manager of the firm, who has just gone to England, is wanted in London to advise about the details of a new steamer. Freight rates are now so high on the down-stream journey and the rush for cargo so great, that I understand the Company is thinking of taking the "Malamir" off the Karun and using her on the Tigris, or if this is not done, of asking permission to bring the mails in the launch "Ishtar," so that the steamers may not waste time waiting for the mails. The "Ishtar" is probably twice as fast as a steamer impeded by a barge, but she is not so imposing in appearance, and for this reason might perhaps not command so much respect from the Arabs. On the other hand, she is quite unlike any vessel that the Turks possess, and could not be mistaken for a Turkish vessel by those whose object is to make themselves disagreeable to the Turkish authorities. The steam-ship "Khalif" is now in dock, and is being given new boilers.

6. *Nakib's House.*—Some weeks ago I sent my native agent to see the Nakib about the case of a British subject who said that he had been robbed in the shrine. The Nakib turned the conversation on to the subject of his house next the Residency. He said that he was anxious to discuss the matter with me personally, and suggested that we should meet in a garden belonging to one of his relations. He said that he was inclined to purchase some English pumps for irrigation, and that his example would be worth a great deal to English trade. I am to-day sending my native agent to see the Nakib again, and I have told him that if the Nakib himself refers to the subject of the proposed meeting, he is to accept the proposal on my behalf. The Nakib wishes nobody to be present, except my native agent to act as interpreter. I am fortunate enough to have a native agent who seems to be respected by all classes, and as long as the conversation is in Arabic, I can be pretty sure of the correctness of his translation.

7. *Oudh Bequest.*—The Vice-Consul has recently been in Bagdad, and he has again impressed on me the fact that practically none of the Bequest money is spent on charitable purposes, and that there are a number of Indians at Kerbela in a semi-starving condition. The same facts have been earnestly represented to me by an Indian Nawab, who has lately been spending some time at Kerbela. Since his return there the Vice-Consul writes that he has seen Sayad Mahommed Bekir Tabatabahi, the former sole recipient of the Kerbela portion. The Mujtahid suggested that each of the recipients should give 100 rupees per month, to be managed by a well-paid agent of the Mujtahids, but he says that this can only be done with the active support of the Resident. I am not at present inclined to take any action on the suggestion.

(Signed) J. RAMSAY, *Political Resident in Turkish Arabia, and His Britannic Majesty's Consul-General, Baghdad.*

November 25, 1907.

[42290] **No. 175.**

Foreign Office to India Office.

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 31, 1907.

WITH reference to your letter of the 27th ultimo, I am directed by Secretary Sir E. Grey to transmit to you the accompanying copy of a note from the French Minister respecting the Muscat Dhows Arbitration.*

As you are aware, on the 4th instant a Memorandum was communicated to the French Ambassador inquiring whether the French Government formally accepted the

* No. 173.

proposals of His Majesty's Government, as explained in the last two paragraphs of the Foreign Office Memorandum of the 6th August, respecting the grant of the right to fly the French flag to Muscatis in the service of the French citizens resident in Oman, and the annual exchange between the French and British Consuls of lists of dhows owned by French citizens and entitled to fly the French flag.

The reply of the French Government is, as you will see, in the affirmative; and, in these circumstances, Sir E. Grey would suggest that telegraphic instructions should be issued to Major Grey forthwith.

I am, &c.

(Signed) LOUIS MALLET.

APPENDIX.

[This Paper should have followod No. 134 on p. 185.]

[38360]

No. 134*.

India Office to Foreign Office.—(*Received November* 21.)

Sir,

India Office, November 20, 1907.

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to forward copy of a letter, with inclosures, which has been received from the Government of India on the subject of a proposal to open a pearl fishery within the territorial waters of Perim, and to inquire whether Secretary Sir E. Grey sees any objection to the enactment of the proposed Regulation declaring the exclusive right of the Government to fish for pearl in those waters, and providing for the exercise and protection of this right.

I am, &c.

(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 134*.

Government of India to Mr. Morley.

(Secret.)

Sir,

Simla, September 19, 1907.

WE have the honour to forward herewith copies of correspondence which we have had with the Government of Bombay on the subject of a proposal to open a pearl fishery within the territorial waters of Perim.

2. It appeared to us desirable that the industry should be opened to public enterprise in the manner suggested by the local Government, since unless our rights to the fishery were declared at an early date outside fishers might come in, and eventually claim territorial rights in some of the banks round the island. We also considered that if the fishery were opened a Regulation would be required to insure its proper management and protection. A draft Regulation, of which a copy is inclosed, has accordingly been prepared, in consultation with the Bombay Government, on the lines of Part III of "The Sea Fisheries Act, 1868" (31 & 32 Vic., cap. 45), relating to oyster fisheries, but with the necessary additions and modifications to adapt it to local requirements.

3. Before taking any action in the matter, however, we have thought it desirable to submit the scheme for your approval in view of the peculiar position of Perim, which is within a mile or two of Turkish territory on the one side and only a few miles from French and Italian possessions on the other.

4. The Bombay Government have pointed out in paragraph 2 of their letter dated the 8th July, 1907, that there is not a clear league of undisputed territorial water on the east side of the island, and that the wording proposed by us of clause 2 (2) of the draft Regulation was consequently not entirely appropriate. It seems best, therefore, to omit any definition of "the territorial waters of Perim" from the Regulation, and we presume that recourse may be had by analogy to the definition of "territorial waters" given in section 7 of "The Territorial Waters Jurisdiction Act, 1878."

5. In practice it is improbable that any complication will arise after the opening of the fishery from the ambiguity as to the limit of territorial waters on the Turkish side, since although it has from time to time been necessary for the Assistant Resident, in compliance with existing orders, to prohibit fishing within the territorial waters as their limits have been hitherto understood, no friction has so far been caused on this account.

We also understand that there are no pearl banks on the Sheikh Saïd, or Turkish, side of the Straits, so that there would never be any question of infringement of Turkish rights.

6. We therefore request that, if His Majesty's Government see no objection, we may be authorized to make the proposed Regulation, under the provisions of "The Government of India Act, 1870" (33 Vic., cap. 3).

We have, &c.

(Signed) MINTO.
H. ERLE RICHARDS.
E. N. BAKER.
C. H. SCOTT.
H. ADAMSON.
J. F. FINLAY.
J. O. MILLER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 134*.

Government of Bombay to Government of India.

Bombay Castle, November 6, 1905.

I AM directed to submit, for the information and orders of the Government of India, a proposal to open out the pearl fishery within the territorial waters of the Island of Perim.

2. The subject has attracted attention since 1887, but it has hitherto been believed that the fishery was not of sufficient value to justify measures involving expense. The policy hitherto adopted has therefore been merely one of prohibition. In August of last year, however, Captain F. de B. Hancock, who was then Assistant Resident at Perim, reported that pearl shell existed in sufficient quantity and quality around the shores of the island to render the fishery, if properly managed, a very fairly remunerative undertaking. It accordingly has been under consideration whether the time has not come to lay aside the previous policy, and to endeavour to open out the industry to public enterprise.

3. Two courses were recommended by Captain Hancock for making the industry profitable to Government: either the imposition, as at Zeyla, of an export duty *ad valorem* on the proceeds of the fishery or the farming out of the fishery to private enterprise—*e.g.*, to the Perim Coal Company or to one of the leading Aden mercantile firms. Major-General Mason, in forwarding Captain Hancock's Report, was averse to either of these proposals being adopted, he being of opinion that the right might be retained as a Government monopoly and the Ceylon practice followed, namely, to advertise the fishery during the fair season for a specified period and allow native boat-owners to fish under Regulation, Government taking a share of the shell secured. I am to attach copies of the correspondence which has ensued for the information of the Government of India.

4. In regard to the system that should be adopted for the working of the fishery, General Mason, for the reasons given in his letter dated the 4th June, 1905, is now disposed to favour the proposal of farming out the fishery either to the Perim Coal Company or to some other firm of known standing and respectability. Such a system will not, it is thought, necessitate the entertainment of a regular water police force. It is anticipated that the crew of the Assistant Resident's cutter, if invested with the necessary authority under the Regulation which it is proposed to introduce, will adequately provide for all present police requirements. The Political Resident at the same time recommends that the first refusal of the monopoly should be given to the Perim Coal Company in view of their present position on the island, and also in view of the fact that they have established a priority of claim by their previous applications. He reports that the Company have now applied for permission to make a regular preliminary survey of the ground before making a firm offer to accept the monopoly, and have also inquired what conditions would be attached by Government to the undertaking.

5. His Excellency the Governor in Council agrees with the Resident that, if action is to be taken, power must be taken by Regulation to control the fishing and ascertain its value. It appears that this is a step which need entail very little expense to Government. I am accordingly to submit, for the consideration of the Government of India, the draft of a Regulation which it is thought might be introduced for protecting and regulating the Perim pearl fishery. The draft has been prepared on the lines of Part III of "The Sea Fisheries Act, 1868" (31 & 32 Vic., cap. 45), relating to oyster fisheries.

It is very simply drawn, and is intended to permit of either a licence to a single firm or to individual boats, as experience may show to be best. His Excellency the Governor in Council is inclined to think that the latter policy is preferable—at any rate in the first instance.

Inclosure 3 in No. 134*.

Major-General Mason to Government of Bombay.

September 29, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith, for the consideration of Government, a letter dated the 13th September, 1904, with inclosures, on the subject of the Perim pearl-shell fishery, from the Assistant Resident, Perim, who recommends, for reasons given, that the industry might be thrown open to private enterprise. This Report was called for by me after my visit to Perim.

2. The précis forwarded by Captain Hancock gives a brief history of the subject, and shows that the question of granting licences for the right of working the fishery was considered by this Residency before, on more than one occasion, and the permission was refused each time. The last application—of which, however, no mention is made in the précis—was in 1900, when the Perim Coal Company renewed their application for a licence which was refused to them in 1899. On this occasion also the licence was refused, and the Government of Bombay, in their letter dated the 9th November, 1900, approved the action of the Resident.

3. At that time the application was refused on the ground that the granting of the sole right to the Perim Coal Company was certain to result in litigation between it and the native divers, who are known to dive for pearls at Perim without permission, and that this might necessitate the entertainment of harbour police.

4. It is now suggested that in the event of the fishery being farmed out to any private enterprise the main burden of the preventive and protective measures could be left in the hands of the farmer. This, however, I would observe, will not prevent litigation arising in case of poaching; and Captain Hancock himself admits that a small body of special harbour police will be necessary if the industry is thrown open to native divers. It seems therefore clear that the considerations which prevailed in 1900 will still hold good.

5. As, however, it is reported that the pearl shell exists in sufficient quantity to render the fishery fairly remunerative, there is no reason why it should not be undertaken by the authorities themselves. At any rate, there would appear to be no harm in undertaking it as an experimental measure, with a view to seeing whether the fishery would actually pay, as anticipated by the Assistant Resident. If the attempt is to be made, the right might be retained as a Government monopoly, and the Ceylon practice, as described in the Report of the Master Attendant, Colombo, dated the 22nd November, 1900, underlying Government letter dated the 7th December, 1900, might be followed, namely, to advertise the fishery during the fair season for a specified period, and invite boat-owners to join in and send their boats properly equipped with divers, &c., the remuneration paid by Government to each owner being in kind—that is, a share of the boat's collection of shells.

6. If the above suggestion commends itself to Government I propose to instruct the Assistant Resident, Perim, accordingly.

Inclosure 4 in No. 134*.

Captain Hancock to Lieutenant-Colonel Davies.

September 13, 1904.

IN forwarding copies of papers on the subject of the pearl-shell fishery of Perim I have the honour to report, for the information of the Political Resident, that from inquiries made I am of opinion that pearl shell exists in sufficient quantity and quality around the shores of the island to render the fishery, if properly managed, a very fairly remunerative undertaking. There is shell in the harbour and around the coast, and some samples that I have had collected were of good quality. There were a few seed pearls

in one of these, and there is reason to hope that the fishery would yield a small percentage of pearls as well as shell.

2. As to the best means of rendering the industry profitable to Government, this might be secured, as at Zeyla, by an export duty *ad valorem*, or perhaps preferably by farming the fishery out, on certain terms as to royalty, to private enterprise, *e.g.*, to the Perim Coal Company, or to one of the leading Aden mercantile firms.

3. The latter arrangement would have the advantage of leaving the main burden of the necessary protective and preventive measures in the hands of the farmer, who, in his own interests, would do all possible to prevent the fishery being either poached or extravagantly exploited; and in this case practically the only action needed at the hands of Government officials would be to inspect and record the quantity of products collected, which could probably be arranged for by this office.

4. The royalty might be so much per maund on shell, and so much per cent. *ad valorem* on pearls, the proper valuation of which would have to be arranged for.

5. If the industry is thrown open to native divers from Zeyla or elsewhere, a small body of special harbour police would seem necessary to prevent evasion of Government dues, or perhaps it would suffice to formally invest my own boatmen with police authority for this purpose.

Inclosure 5 in No. 134*.

Memorandum re Perim Pearl Fishery.

THE existence of this fishery appears to have first come to notice in the year 1887, when the question of granting licences for the right of working the fishery appears to have been considered. In May of that year an order was passed by the Aden Residency that no mother-of-pearl fishing should thenceforth be allowed in the harbour.

2. The records of this office appear to contain nothing further on the subject until the year 1899, when the Perim Coal Company applied for a licence for pearl and pearl-shell fishing in the harbour and within the three-mile limit, which the Political Resident of Aden refused to grant them. In the course of correspondence on the subject at that time, it came to light that, in spite of the prohibition of 1887, the pearl-shell fishery at Perim was being systematically and periodically poached by native craft, especially during the monsoon season. The prohibition was accordingly republished by a notification, dated the 11th June, 1899, when it was announced that offenders against the prohibition would be liable to the confiscation of their boats and the contents thereof.

3. At the same time the Assistant Resident was directed to report upon the fishery and upon the importance attaching to the local trade in pearls and pearl shell.

From local sources of information he reported unfavourably upon the possibilities of the fishery—to the effect that the shell found was small and poor in quality, and that the pearls were the same, and that local trade was unimportant.

4. He was thereupon directed to continue a careful watch in the harbour and over the three-mile limit, and informed that if it should thereafter appear that the trade was profitably taxable, the restriction would be removed. The Assistant Resident was directed to watch.

5. This he appears to have continued to do. I am verbally informed that Captain H. S. Strong, when Assistant Resident here, caught some natives taking shell and fined them, and in 1904 there is reference in the records to a further capture of shell fishers by Captain E. O'Brien and confiscation of the shell found in their boats.

6. I have personally renewed inquiry into the condition of the fishery, and am personally inclined to the opinion that the trade might now be profitably taxable. I propose to submit a report on the matter after further inquiry.

(Signed) P. DE B. HANCOCK,
Assistant Resident, Perim.

Perim, August 30, 1904.

Inclosure 6 in No. 134*.

Captain Hancock to Vice-Consul, Zeyla.

August 26, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to request the favour of such information as you can give me as to the terms upon which pearl shell fisheries are allowed on the coast of the Protectorate under your charge. I have reason to believe that such a fishery might prove a success on the shores of Perim Island, and should be much obliged for any information you can give me as to the best mode of starting it with due regard to the interests of Government.

2. A certain Abdoo Ahmad, nakhoda of the dhow "Fath-el-Khair," owned by Edris Umesh Habshi, of Zeyla, and holding a licence under your signature to carry the British flag, is one of those who have expressed willingness to take part in the proposed experiment, and I should be much obliged for any information you can give me as to his connections and general respectability, &c.

Inclosure 7 in No. 134*.

Mr. Power to Captain Hancock.

September 6, 1904.

IN reply to your letter dated the 26th August, 1904, I have the honour to inform you that there are no rules or regulations in force at Zeyla (or elsewhere on the coast) as regards pearl fishing. There is practically very little pearl fishing off Zeyla itself, small pearls being obtained from Elgori and Laihlo; the larger pearls come from Ras Hafoon, on the Berbera side.

2. The divers from this district sell their pearls locally to the merchants. No import duty is charged, being a sea production. However, an export duty of 1 per cent., *ad valorem*, is levied. If permission be given for pearl fishing near Perim there are many divers who are willing to undertake the work.

3. With reference to Abdoo Ahmad, I know very little about him; he was until a year or so ago a French subject, living at Jibuti and Tajurrah. I have had no complaints against him.

Inclosure 8 in No. 134*.

Mr. Turner to Major-General Mason

December 24, 1904.

I HAVE the honour to submit for your consideration what seem to me the base points of a fair working agreement, which can be amplified hereafter:—

(*a.*) The Company to have the monopoly for a term of years.

(*b.*) The Company to provide the divers and necessary plant and gear for carrying on the fishery, at such seasons and times as may be convenient to them and at their discretion.

(*c.*) The Company's out-of-pocket expenses incurred in carrying on the fishing shall be the first charge on gross proceeds of same.

(*d.*) The Government shall make the best possible arrangement for sale of pearl shell and pearls for joint account and benefit, either on the spot at Perim, or Aden or other market.

(*e.*) The Government shall have the right to send a representative with the Company's boats when engaged on such fishing, as custodian of the results, who shall take delivery of same by sorting and weight wherever may be agreed on, and give the Company a provisional receipt for same pending sale.

(*f.*) The Government out-of-pocket expenses for wages of custodian, landing, sorting, warehousing, brokerage or auction charges, freight to a market, and such like incidental items of disbursements necessary for realizing values, shall be the second charge on gross proceeds of fishery.

(*g.*) Government and Company shall thereafter—all accepted and legitimate out-of-pocket expenses on both sides being deducted as above—share equally in the net proceeds, Government paying Company their share of realizations quarterly.

(*h.*) The revenue derived from this source to be applied to the reduction of the administrative charges of the Island.

On receipt of your views with additions or amendments to above, I will give same my best consideration, and as soon as an acceptable agreement is formulated, I will send details to the Head Office of the Company for their approval and confirmation.

Inclosure 9 in No. 134*.

Major-General Mason to Government of Bombay.

January 6, 1905.

COPY forwarded to the Secretary to Government, Political Department, Bombay, in continuation of this office No. 294, dated 29th September, 1904.

Inclosure 10 in No. 134*.

Government of Bombay to Major-General Mason.

Bombay Castle, January 14, 1905.

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 294, dated the 29th September, 1904, and of its accompaniments, submitting a proposal for working the pearl fishery at Perim.

2. In reply, I am to observe that the peculiar situation of Perim, which is within a mile or two of Turkish territory on the one side, and only a few miles from French and Italian possessions on the other, makes it necessary to proceed with caution in dealing with a proposal of this kind. The circumstances of Ceylon and the Persian Gulf are not quite similar. In Ceylon the pearl fisheries are a Government monopoly protected by Regulation No. 3 of 1811, and there exists a recognized territorial sovereignty exceeding the ordinary limit of three miles of the sea at low tide. On the other hand, the fisheries in the Persian Gulf are not regulated by any rule or formal written agreement.

3. It will thus be seen that neither the circumstances of Ceylon nor those of the Persian Gulf are analogous to those at Perim, and that in framing a regulation to control the fishing at Perim, it is of special importance to consider the bearing of international law on the situation at that place.

4. The question as to what particular form of legislation would be suitable to the conditions at Perim depends mainly on the nature of the control which it is desired to exercise. If the Ceylon system of direct Government control is adopted, then it would possibly suffice to pass a short regulation—

(1.) Declaring that all rights to the pearl fishing within the limits specified are vested in Government;

(2.) Giving the Resident power to form rules regulating the conditions on which pearl fishing within such limits may be permitted;

(3.) Making it an offence for any one to fish for oysters in contravention of such rules, and perhaps

(4.) Giving power to confiscate a vessel committing depredations in the pearl fishery as in the Ceylon Regulation No. 3 of 1811.

In connection with the framing of such a regulation it would be useful to refer to section 32 (2) (7) and (8) of Burmah Regulation III of 1889, and sections 3, 7, and 8 to 10 of Act VII of 1875, and the rules which appear to have been passed thereunder (see footnote 4 at p. 8 of the Burmah Code, third edition).

5. If, on the other hand, it is only intended to give a general licence to some other persons or body to have a monopoly of, and power to regulate, the fishery, then the proposed regulation might perhaps, as far as is necessary, follow the lines of Part III of the Sea Fisheries Act, 1868 (31 and 32, Vict., cap. 45) relating to oyster fisheries. Whichever form of legislation is adopted, it would be desirable, in order to prevent any jurisdictional questions arising, to include a provision that an offence committed within the limits specified in the proposed regulation may be tried, punished, and in all respects dealt with as if it had been committed on the land abutting on the coast of Perim [*e.g.*, the Indian Fisheries Act, 1897, section 4 (2)].

6. I am to request that you will reconsider the proposal with particular reference to the question of legislation, and favour Government with your opinion as to which of the two alternative methods would be more suitable to the local conditions of Perim submitting at the same time a draft of the regulation you would propose.

Inclosure 11 in No. 134*.

Major-General Mason to Government of Bombay.

June 4, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to submit the following reply to your No. 231, dated 14th January last, the delay in which has been partly due to the absence on leave of Mr. Turner, the Managing Agent of the Perim Coal Company, and the consequent lack of certain information required, and partly to pressure of other work in this office.

2. In regard to paragraph 2 of your letter now under reply, I have the honour to observe that it would not appear that the geographical situation of the Island of Perim presents any insuperable obstacle to the proposal to open the pearl-shell fishery there.

The present orders of the Assistant Resident at Perim are to prevent any fishery within the territorial waters of the Island and as pointed out in the summary accompanying my letter No. 294 of the 29th September last, it has from time to time been necessary for the Assistant Resident to take preventive action in the course of which hitherto no territorial or international complications have arisen.

3. In this connection I have the honour to report that the present Assistant-Resident Captain Trotter has only a short time ago had to take similar action. His reports in connection with the incident (of which copies are attached) tend to confirm the previously expressed opinion that the pearl-shell fishery is of some value and worth working.

4. So long as the fishery remains closed, these incidents will from time to time recur, and recent experience has confirmed the opinion previously expressed by Captain Hancock that to satisfactorily carry on this preventive work and his other duties in the harbour, the Assistant Resident at Perim really needs a small sea-worthy steam-launch in place of the sailing boat with which he is at present provided. Upon the fishery being opened, this will probably be a more pressing necessity.

5. To the north, west and south of the Island of Perim there is a clear one marine league stretch of indisputable territorial waters, and to the east it would not appear probable that any valid objection could ever be raised to treating the central line passing down the middle of the narrow straits of Babel Mandeb as the natural boundary between the waters of Perim and those of adjacent Turkish territory at Sheikh Said.

6. In regard to legislation, I am of opinion that this should be as simple and concise as possible, and I append herewith draft of a regulation which I think would meet requirements. I have the honour to suggest that this may be submitted to the Legal Remembrancer to the Government for such additions or improvements as may be considered necessary.

7. I am now disposed to favour the system of farming out the monopoly to some person or body rather than to adopt any system of direct Government control, which would entail considerable trouble and expense and probably not lead to such satisfactory results as those which would be secured by farming it out on some reasonably profitable terms as to "Royalty" to either the Perim Coal Company or some other person or firm of known standing and respectability.

8. And I am further disposed to recommend the grant of first refusal to the Perim Coal Company in view of their present position on the island, and also in view of the fact that they have established a priority of claim by their previous applications referred to in past correspondence.

9. The Perim Coal Company have now applied for permission to make a regular preliminary survey of the ground before making a firm offer to accept the farm of this monopoly, and have also inquired what conditions would be attached by Government to the undertaking as apart from terms.

10. With the former request I now await the order of the Government to comply, and in regard to the latter, I append a brief draft of the only conditions which it would seem necessary to impose. As to the period for which the monopoly should be granted it would seem necessary to make this long enough to give the Company reasonable opportunity of profiting from the undertaking and it might perhaps be most convenient

to arrange that their lease of the fishery should run concurrently with their lease of the other parts of the Island.

11. It appears desirable to provide for regular inspection of the fishery and also for regular submission of accounts upon which to calculate the amount of royalty to be paid for the monopoly. The rate of that remains to be fixed in consultation with the Managing Agent of the Company.

12. For purposes of protection I have the honour to recommend the increase in the boat establishment of the Assistant Resident at Perim which has been already recommended in this office letter, dated the 30th December, 1904, and that the members of that establishment should be invested with the ordinary powers of Water Police.

13. If, however, the proposal to supply the Assistant Resident with a small steam-launch is approved, a different estimate will be submitted to cover the cost of the purchase and maintenance of that and of the establishment which will be required to manage it.

Inclosure 12 in No. 134*.

Captain Trotter to Captain Hancock.

May 18, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to report that a nakhoda Saroor Hamid arrived here about the 10th instant and then asked for permission to dive in the harbour for pearl-shell. He said that his buggalow was at Injar, that he had got a certain amount of shell there and that he would come here if he got permission. I told him he might come and that I would superintend the diving myself and that he was not to dive for more than five hours. He asked that half the profits of the shell might be given to him, and I said I could not promise this, but that if he cared to dive I would lay the facts before the Resident.

He accordingly on the 15th instant brought his buggalow at 7 A.M. I went out on it and he dived till 12 A.M.; I wished to see for myself what actually would be the results obtainable. There were two men diving in two boats from 7 A.M. to noon, the result being twenty-three shells, weight 31 lb. (net). It was not a favourable day, the water not being clear.

The nakhoda (who actually dived himself) says that in a day he would get between thirty or forty shells and that he did a good day's work, as where he fished before at Farsan he only got ten or twenty shells a day and those not big ones.

I think the man might, if possible, be allowed the half profits in the shell. He returns here from Injar in about a month's time.

The shell from Injar, of which there were 266, I have not interfered with.

The shell he got here I have had sealed up in a bag containing twenty-three, and I am sending it in to Aden for your inspection.

Inclosure 13 in No. 134*.

Captain Trotter to Captain Hancock.

May 20, 1905.

I HAVE the honour to inform you as follows:—

I was up on the lighthouse about 8 A.M. on the 17th instant when I saw several "hooris" coming towards Obstruction Point. The lighthouse khalasi said they were pearl divers. I had a good look at them and saw that men were actually diving. I then went across to the other side and engaged the "Midge" for which the Perim Coal Company at first wanted 10*l.*, but came down to 5*l. plus* the cost of an insurance telegram to England (rupees 11 : 1 : 0).

Directly the hooris saw the launch, it was then about a mile off, they all started for dear life towards Skeikh Saïd, and as I did not wish to go into Turkish waters, I was only able to get three out of eleven, and these would not stop until I fired across their bows.

The three of them had altogether only about a maund (28 lb.) of shell on board them and some kerosene tins with glass let into them.

There were seven men and boys in the three hooris. I put the men and hooris on the "Midge," took them into Perim, and made the men a sort of prisoners at large,

the chauki being too small for so many. On the 18th I had up all the men and asked them why they were diving without permission. They said they had come from "Farsan," were strangers, and did not know they were doing wrong. I then asked them why then had they at once gone off as fast as possible directly they saw the launch.

They said they were afraid of being run down, and in any case they said *they* were not responsible, but the nakhodas of their three buggalows.

I then said they must either pay the cost of the launch in "cash" or "shell," or have their "hooris," &c., confiscated, as the Resident at Aden might decide. They then offered in lieu of confiscation to pay a fine in pearl shell, saying they had no cash, and seeing that the value of the three hooris taken, and of the 28 lb. of shell in them was but little, I told them that if they deposited 100 rupees worth of pearl shell, I would see what I could do for them, and that one of their nakhodas must come over with it.

One of the nakhodas came over on the 19th from Sheikh Saïd bringing with him 196 lb. of shell, which he deposited, and said that he was willing to leave security in the shape of a "hoori," that its value was 100 rupees. He said that he did not know that pearl fishing was forbidden here; that he had come here on his way from Farsan, where he had been pearl fishing. I then told him he could take his men away; that I would keep the shell he had deposited and the "hooris," &c., until I received a definite answer from the Resident, which I expected on Tuesday, the 23rd instant. He then said that it was no use his staying at Sheikh Saïd, as there was no shell to be got there, and that he wished to leave, and would return in about twenty days' time. I told him he could do as he liked, and that I would retain the "hooris" and shell and the 196 lb. of shell deposited by him, and would on his return either hand him back his 196 lb. or confiscate his "hooris" as the Resident might decide, to which he agreed.

I asked him whether he thought the pearl fishery good round Perim; he said "yes." I then asked him, supposing his eight "hooris" were to dive, how much they would get a day. He said, of course, it depended, and that it would probably be from 50 rupees to 20 rupees worth per day according to the clearness of the water. He also said that, were the Government to consider the letting out of the pearl fishery, he would be glad to dive and hand in 10 per cent. of his earnings to Government.

Inclosure 14 in No. 134*.

Draft Regulation.

No. of 1905.

A Regulation for Protecting and Regulating the Perim Pearl Fishery.

WHEREAS the right to fish for pearl and pearl shell in the territorial waters of Perim belongs exclusively to Government, and whereas it is expedient to provide for the protection and exercise of the right, it is hereby enacted as follows:— Preamble.

1.—(1.) This Regulation may be called "The Perim Pearl Fishery Regulation, 1905." Short title and commencement.

(2.) It shall come into force at once.

2. In this Regulation— Definition.

(1.) "Resident" means the Political Resident at Aden.

(2.) "Person" includes any Company or Association, or body of individuals, whether incorporated or not.

(3.) "Pearl oysters" do not include ordinary edible oysters found on the shore, and include the brood and spawn of pearl oysters.

3. No right to fish for pearl or pearl shell in the territorial waters of Perim shall be deemed to vest in any person unless conferred by licence under this Regulation. No right to be deemed to vest except under licence.

Disposal of right.

4. It shall be lawful for the Resident to grant to any person the right of fishing for pearl or pearl shell in the territorial waters of Perim by licence.

Conditions of grant of licence.

5.—(1.) The Resident may, with the previous sanction of the Governor in Council, make rules for the purpose of carrying into effect the provisions of this Regulation.

(2.) In particular, and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power, the Resident may make rules—

(*a.*) Prescribing the fees to be paid by licensees, and the period and limits within which, and the conditions subject to which, licences may be granted;

(*b.*) Regulating the management and inspection of the fishery and prescribing the seasons of fishing, and the size of shell to be fished for; and

(*c.*) Prescribing the accounts to be kept and the returns to be submitted by the licensee, the particulars to be entered therein, and the manner in which they should be verified.

Acts prohibited.

6. Except for the grantee of a licence under section 4 and his agents, servants, and workmen, and within the limits, if any, prescribed in his licence, it shall not be lawful for any person to do, within the territorial waters of Perim, any of the following things, namely:—

(1.) To use any implement of fishing, except a line and hook or a net adapted solely for catching floating fish, and so used as not to disturb or injure in any manner any pearl oyster bed or pearl oysters or the pearl fishery.

(2.) To dredge for ballast or any other substance, whether of the like description or not, except under a lawful authority for improving the navigation.

(3.) To place any implement, apparatus, or thing prejudicial, or likely to be prejudicial, to any pearl-oyster bed or pearl oysters, or to the pearl fishery, except for a lawful purpose of navigation or anchorage.

(4.) Except as last aforesaid, to disturb or injure in any manner any pearl-oyster bed, or pearl oysters, or the pearl fishery.

Penalties.

7.—(1.) Whoever does any act in contravention of section 6 shall be punished for the first offence with imprisonment which may extend to three months, or with fine not exceeding 200 rupees, or with both; and for the second and every subsequent offence with imprisonment which may extend to six months, or with fine not exceeding 500 rupees, or with both.

(2.) Whoever wilfully does or omits to do anything in contravention of any rule made under section 5 or any condition of a licence granted under section 4 shall be liable to imprisonment which may extend to three months, or with fine not exceeding 200 rupees, or with both.

Procedure.

8. An offence under this Regulation may be tried, punished, and in all respects dealt with, and with the same procedure, as if it had been committed on the land abutting on the sea coast of the Island of Perim.

Liability of master.

9. When any offence under this Regulation has been committed by some person conveyed in a ship or boat, the master or person for the time being in charge of such ship or boat shall be deemed to have committed such offence unless the person who actually committed such offence is proved guilty to the satisfaction of the Court.

Confiscation.

10. In every case in which an offender is convicted under this Regulation, all pearl and pearl oysters in respect of which such offender is convicted, and the ship or boat in which such offender was conveyed, and her tackle, apparel, and furniture, and any property on board thereof, may be confiscated if the Court convicting such offender thinks fit so to order.

Arrest without warrant.

11. Any police officer, or other person especially empowered by the Resident in this behalf, either by name or as holding any office for the time being, may arrest, without warrant, any person committing in his view any offence punishable under this Regulation.

Form of Licence.

Licence is hereby granted to (hereinafter called the licensee) conferring upon him the right to fish in the territorial waters of Perim for pearl or pearl shell for the period of subject to the following conditions:—

(*a.*) That the licensee shall pay as licence fee on last day of each a sum equal to per cent. of the value of the pearl and pearl shell taken, the

said value to be estimated by the Assistant Resident at Perim subject to appeal to the Resident, whose decision shall be final;

(*b.*) That the licensee shall keep regular accounts showing correctly the amount and value of the pearl and pearl shell taken, and the proceeds of sales thereof and shall on the last day of each deliver a copy of the said accounts to the Assistant Resident at Perim.

(*c.*) That the licensee shall at all times allow to the Assistant Resident at Perim and any officers or persons duly appointed by the Resident in that behalf free access to any places, opened or inclosed, on land or at sea, where any pearls, pearl shells, or pearl fishery apparatus belonging to the licensee may be lying or believed to be lying, or where any operations of the licensee connected with the fishery may be carried on, or believed to be carried on.

(*d.*) That this licence may be cancelled by the Resident in the event of breach of any of the above conditions.

Inclosure 15 in No. 134*.

Government of India to Rear-Admiral Poë.

Fort William, February 26, 1906.

I AM directed to inclose herewith copies of the letter, dated the 6th November, 1905, from the Government of Bombay, regarding a proposal to develop a pearl fishery industry within the territorial waters of the Island of Perim, and of an extract from a note by Major-General Mason, Political Resident at Aden, on the same subject. I am to inquire whether your Excellency sees any objection to the proposal put forward by the Governor in Council.

Inclosure 16 in No. 134*.

Rear-Admiral Poë to Government of India.

"*Hermes*," *at Bombay, March* 6, 1906.

IN reply to your letter of the 26th February, 1906, regarding a proposal to develop a pearl fishing industry within the territorial waters of the Island of Perim, I have the honour to inform you that I see no naval objection to the proposal as set forth in the papers inclosed in your letter, but that Perim being in the Mediterranean command and outside the limits of the East Indies Station, I would suggest that the Commander-in-chief, Mediterranean, should be referred to.

2. I have not forwarded the correspondence to him, as I consider that any reference to the matter should more properly emanate from the Government of India, by whom the proposal was first referred to me.

Inclosure 17 in No. 134*.

Government of India to Lord Beresford.

Simla, March 19, 1906.

I AM directed to inclose herewith a copy of the letter, dated the 6th November, 1905, from the Government of Bombay, regarding a proposal to develop a pearl fishery industry within the territorial waters of the Island of Perim, and an extract from a note by Major-General Mason, Political Resident at Aden, on the same subject. I am also to forward, for your information, a copy of a letter, dated the 6th March, 1906, from his Excellency the Naval Commander-in-chief, East Indies Station, who was consulted in the matter.

2. I am to inquire whether your Lordship sees any objection to the proposal put forward by the Governor in Council.

Inclosure 18 in No. 134*.

Government of Bombay to Government of India.

Bombay Castle, March 15, 1906.

IN continuation of my letter, dated the 6th November, 1905, I am directed to forward herewith, for the information of the Government of India, copy of a letter from the Political Resident, Aden, dated the 31st January, 1906, and its inclosures, regarding the proposal to open out the pearl fishery within the waters of the Island of Perim.

Inclosure 19 in No. 134*.

Major-General Mason to Government of Bombay.

January 31, 1906.

WITH reference to this office letter, dated the 4th June, 1905, to which the favour of an early reply is solicited, I have the honour to attach herewith copies of certain reports which I have received from the Registrar of Trade at Aden and from the Assistant Resident at Perim, which I think may prove of interest to Government.

2. In the light of the further information which tends to show that pearl fishery in the waters of this Protectorate might prove more generally profitable than was at first anticipated, I would suggest, for the consideration of Government, that a specialist might be deputed to report upon the whole matter with a view to its possibly proving more profitable for the Perim fishery to be worked by Government in combination with other fisheries than for the same to be leased out to a private Company.

3. In this case the draft Regulation would of course need modification.

Inclosure 20 in No. 134*.

Registrar of Trade, Aden, to Lieutenant-Colonel Davies.

June 3, 1905.

WITH reference to your letter dated the 21st ultimo, I beg to furnish the following information regarding the pearl and pearl shell fishery in the Red Sea and other districts:—

(*a.*) Mother-of-pearl shells are found chiefly near and round the following place:—

Red Sea—Fursan, Bebel Zughur Hanaish, Hodeida, Lohaia (Digfash), and Perim.

Gulf ports—Ras-el-ara, Bir Ali, Makatin, and Balhaf.

Somali Coast ports—Alula, Failak, Zeyla, Bandar Cassim, and the Island of Socotra.

(*b.*) The annual import of the pearl shell in Aden averages 4,500 cwt., valued at 2,25,000 rupees.

Pearls are chiefly imported from Massowah and Lohaia and exported to Bombay.

The average value of the export to Bombay is 2 lakhs of rupees.

(*c.*) Almost the whole quantity imported is sold by public auction at the Maala wharf, the exceptions being occasional small consignments from agents of merchants on the coast, which are removed by the consignee.

On the arrival of the shells, say, 200 bags, a notice is sent round by the Registrar of Trade intimating the time, &c., when the shells are to be auctioned.

The shells are placed in small heaps and divided into lots of ten to thirty bags. The auction sale is conducted by the Registrar. The shells are then bagged and weighed and the money paid to the Registrar, who makes a separate account for each owner and disburses the amounts due. The shells are sold by the frasla of 32 lb. weight and the price varies from 8 to 15 per frasla according to size and quality and the rate in the home market. The principal countries to which the pearl shell is exported are Austria (Trieste), United Kingdom, Germany and Bombay, Austria, and Bombay are the chief markets supplied, the other taking not more than 100 to 150 cwt. only.

(*d.*) The shell-fishers who visit Aden from the Red Sea are Turkish subjects and state that they pay no taxes for fishing, but only a yearly tax of 12 dollars as subjects of the Sultan. Except the Sultan's subjects no others fish in those waters.

On the Somali Coast, if the fishers are not inhabitants of those ports, they are called on to pay 5 per cent. on the value. A tax of 5 per cent. is also imposed by the Sultans on the Arabian Coast.

(*e.*) Owing to element of "luck" or uncertainty in pearl-fishing, it was found difficult to extract any information to serve as a basis for a percentage. One fisher, however, of twenty-five years' experience, stated that of every 200 shells one may yield a pearl or two or, say, 1 pearl to 100 shell fished.

(*f.*) Shells are valued by merchants in Aden according to their size and thickness —the larger the shell the higher the value. An important factor in assessing the value at an auction is the rate ruling at the time in the home market, which is usually telegraphed for during the shell season. The average value is from 35 to 55 rupees per cent. cwt.

(*g.*) The Port Trust charge a commission besides the usual wharfage, toll and scale fees of 1¼ per cent. on the value for conducting the sale which amounts to about 3,000 rupees a year, the other fees total 1,000 rupees annually.

(*h.*) Beyond the shells being scraped to remove all the barnacles and other extraneous substances they undergo no process of cleaning prior to shipment.

2. Aden is not the only entrepôt for shells as much of the Red Sea produce is disposed of at Massowah and some of the Somali Coast shells are taken to Zeyla as well. Pearls are usually taken or sent direct to Bombay, which is found to be the best market.

All the shell diving is carried on in a most primitive manner, and is not unattended with risk to life and limb, owing to the great depth, about 60 to 80 feet, and the sharks which abound in some districts.

The divers are provided with small tin boxes, which are open at one end and have glasses fixed to the other. These they place on the surface and locate the oyster grounds. When a "ground" is discovered they place a wooden clip on the nose and descend with the aid of a stone platform attached to ropes; some dispense with this stone.

Considering that the export of pearls alone from Aden is 2 lakhs it is evident that some lucky "finds" are made every year, but some hundreds of boats engage in the fishing which reduces the average and the prospects of profit as well.

As the waters around Perim have been closed to pearl fishing, that would be the best ground for any Government venture, and nakhodas can easily be obtained to undertake the contract. Speaking generally, pearl fishing affords about 30 per cent. profit on the outlay, with the constant prospect in view of fishing up a little fortune, as has been done by many.

Inclosure 21 in No. 134*.

Registrar of Trade, Aden, to Lieutenant-Colonel Davies.

June 8, 1905.

IN continuation of this office letter, dated the 3rd instant, I beg to supplement that Report with the following information:—

Mother-of-pearl shells are priced according to the size. There are five sizes and the average rates in the home market are as follows:—

First	5*l.*	per cwt.	or rupees	21 : 6 : 9	per frasla.
Second Sh.	80*s.*	„	„	17 : 2 : 3	„
Third „	70*s.*	„	„	15 : 0 : 0	„
Fourth „	50*s.*	„	„	10 : 11 : 6	„
Fifth „	30*s.*	„	„	6 : 6 : 9	„

These rates, of course, are subject to fluctuations more or less.

A list of the principal pearl merchants are those who purchase pearls in Aden is given below:—

Mooljee Raghawjee.	Abdul Kader Sanoa.
Maigjee Chapsee.	A. and J. Laljee.
Rahimtoola Mowjee.	Hajeebhoy Laljee and Co.
Esmail Mowjee.	Haridass Chapsi.
Runchore Nanjee.	

Mohomed Bazarra as agent for Sheikh Bader and Syed Ali Nihari.

Inclosure 22 in No. 134*.

Registrar of Trade, Aden, to Lieutenant-Colonel Davies.

June 22, 1905.

REGARDING the further information required as to pearl shell and pearls called for in letter of the 15th instant, I beg to report as follows:—

(*a.*) Mother-of-pearl shells are exported to Bombay, Austria, United Kingdom, Germany, Belgium, Italy, and Egypt. Austria and Bombay are the principal markets. The average quantity exported is 4,000 cwt., valued at 2,25,000 rupees.

(*b.*) The principal exporters are—

Messrs. the Societa Italiana.	Syed Taha Safee, Esq.
Bardey, Bufford and Co.	Syed Mohsin Safee, Esq.
Mohomed Bazarra, Esq.	Messrs. Dadabhoy and Co.
Moraj Datoo, Esq.	Max Klien, Esq.
Menahim Messa, Esq.	

Export valued at 2¼ lakhs.

(*c.*) The chief exporters of pearls from Aden are:—

Mooljee Ragowjee,	A. and J. Laljee,
Maigjee Chapsi,	Hajeebhoy Laljee and Co.,
Mohomed Bazarra,	Haridass Chapsi.

Exports valued at 2 lakhs annually.

(*d.*) The average value of the export of pearls was given at 2 lakhs, after comparing the value registered for the past three years, which was in 1902–3 about ¼ lakhs, 1903–4 3½ lakhs, and in 1904–5 1½ lakhs.

(*e.*) The consignees of pearls are the exporters, a list of whom is given in paragraph (*c*).

There are probably other consignees who do not declare the pearls received or purchased by them.

2. The Aden local rules, p. 37, show the system under which pearl shells are to be disposed of, and which rules, slightly modified, are now followed. Also see section 17, p. 21, of the Aden Port Trust Bye-laws.

Inclosure 23 in No. 134*.

Captain Hancock to Government of Bombay.

December 2, 1905.

IN accordance with instructions from the Resident on his recent visit to Perim, I place the following facts on record reference pearl fishing in Perim waters:—

1. There are three or four good beds of pearl shell within Perim waters.

2. Captain Fisher, Perim Coal Company, with ten years' experience of Perim, states that if systematically worked the pearl fishing within Perim waters would last two seasons.

3. There are pearl-shell beds in Captain Fisher's opinion right down to Cape Guardafui from Perim on both sides of the water.

4. One large pearl-shell bed is on the wreck of the "Ischia," in Turtle Reach waters, but this wreck is reported to have been bought by a syndicate of natives, who have still got rights over the actual wreck. The legal documents giving these rights are in possession of the Perim Coal Company.

5. Captain Fisher tells me his income (average) from the Perim Coal Company is about 350 rupees per mensem, but he would take less than this for certain and permanent Government service. He knows of pearl-shell beds outside Perim waters, but he would only divulge this information to his employers.

6. Since the Resident's visit the Managing Agent of the Perim Coal Company has again approached me on the subject. I would give him no answer, as his inquiries were of a nature which prevented me doing so, *i.e.*, if the Government were anxious to take over the pearl-fishing rights if the Perim Coal Company did not do so, &c.

7. I have also found out to-day that there is a large quantity of shell between Azalia Point and wreck of the "Hutton," near Obstruction Point, and also near Pirie Buoy.

8. The Resident also asked me to note the point of rights of fishing outside Perim waters. This I now do.

Inclosure 24 in No. 134*.

Government of India, Marine Department, to Foreign Department.

Simla, May 12, 1906.

TRANSFERRED for favour of disposal.

Inclosure 25 in No. 134*.

Lord Beresford to Government of India.

"*Bulwark*," *at Malta, April* 17, 1906.

WITH reference to your letter of the 19th March, 1906, with inclosures regarding a proposal to develop a pearl fishery industry within the territorial waters of the Island of Perim, I have the honour to inform you that I see no objection to the proposal from a naval point of view.

Inclosure 26 in No. 134*.

Government of India to Government of Bombay.

Fort William, March 18, 1907.

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of letters dated the 6th November, 1905, and inclosures, and the 15th March, 1906, and inclosure, from the Government of Bombay submitting a proposal for the opening of a pearl fishery within the territorial waters of the Island of Perim, and forwarding for consideration a draft of a Regulation for the purpose of protecting and regulating the fishery.

2. In reply I am to say that the Government of India see no reason why the industry should not be opened to public enterprise in the manner suggested by the Bombay Government, and they agree that if this is done a Regulation will be required for the protection and proper management of the fishery.

The question whether it would be advisable in the first instance to grant a monopoly of the fishery to a single firm, such as the Perim Coal Company, or to issue licences to individual boat owners may be decided by the Government of Bombay at their discretion.

3. I am accordingly to forward, for the consideration of the Governor in Council, a revised draft Regulation, which follows generally the lines of the draft forwarded with Sir Steyning W. Edgerley's letter [of the 6th November, 1905, but contains such additions and modifications as appear to be necessary to make the proposed law clear and effective.

4. In inviting an expression of his Excellency's views as to the suitability of the draft, I am to explain that, instead of appending a draft licence form to the Regulation, it has been thought preferable to grant to the Resident at Aden power under the Regulation to issue the necessary licence, leaving the form of licence to be settled by the Resident at his discretion, subject to the sanction of the Government of Bombay.

By the adoption of this course the Resident will be enabled to adapt the form of licence to the circumstances of the case. If he thought it desirable to grant the exclusive right of fishing to one Company or person, he could frame the licence accordingly, while, if he decided to license a number of persons, a different form could be used. Further, the Resident could provide, by means of a clause in the licence, for the taking of security from licensees, thus removing the necessity for a general provision on the subject of the recovery of fees, which would otherwise be required.

5. In paragraph 2 (2) of the Regulation a definition of the phrase "the territorial waters of Perim" has been inserted, since, if persons are to be liable to penalties for fishing in those waters without a licence, it seems desirable that the limits within which fishing is prohibited should be made clear.

6. The Government of India have some doubt whether sub-clause (3) of clause 4 of the draft, which provides for the publication of rules, should not be modified so as to permit of publication at Aden rather than in the Local Government Gazette. They will be glad to have the opinion of the Government of Bombay on this point, and also as to the suitability of clause 8, which, as it now stands, reproduces the provisions of section 20 of the Sea Fisheries Act, 1883.

Inclosure 27 in No. 134[c].

Draft of a Regulation for protecting the Perim Pearl Fishery.

WHEREAS the right to fish for pearl and pearl shell in the territorial waters of the Island of Perim belongs exclusively to Government; and whereas it is expedient to provide for the protection of this right by prohibiting fishing by the public save under licence. It is hereby enacted as follows:—

Short title. Definitions.

1. This Regulation may be called the Perim Pearl Fishery Regulation, 1907.

2 In this Regulation, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context—

(1.) "Resident" means the Political Resident at Aden;

(2.) The expression "the territorial waters of Perim" means the sea within a distance of one marine league of the sea coast of the Island of Perim; and

(3.) "Pearl oyster" includes the brood and spawn of pearl oysters, but does not include ordinary edible oysters.

Prohibition of fishing for pearl without licence.

3. No person shall fish for pearl or pearl shell in the territorial waters of Perim except under a licence granted by the Resident and to the extent and in the manner prescribed thereby.

Power for Resident to make rules.

4.—(1.) The Resident, with the previous sanction of the Local Government, may make rules to carry out the purposes and objects of this Regulation.

(2.) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing power, such rules may—

(*a.*) Prescribe the form of licences, the period and limits within which, and the conditions subject to which, licences may be granted and the fees to be paid by licensees;

(*b.*) Regulate the management and inspection of the fishery and prescribe the seasons of fishing and the size of shell which may be taken; and

(*c.*) Prescribe the accounts to be kept and the returns to be submitted by licensees, the particulars to be entered therein, and the manner in which they should be verified.

(3.) All rules made under this section shall be published in the local official Gazette, and on such publication shall have effect as if enacted in this Regulation.

Certain Acts prohibited.

5. No person other than a licensee, and his agents, servants and workmen, acting within the limits, if any, prescribed in his licence, shall do, within the territorial waters of Perim, any of the following things, namely:—

(1.) Use any implement of fishing, except a line and a hook or a net, adapted solely for catching floating fish and so used as not to disturb or injure in any manner any pearl oyster bed or pearl oysters or the pearl fishery; or

(2.) Dredge for ballast or any other substance, whether of the like description or not, except under a lawful authority for improving the navigation; or

(3.) Place any implement, apparatus or thing prejudicial or likely to be prejudicial to any pearl oyster bed or pearl oysters or to the pearl fishery, except for a lawful purpose of navigation or anchorage; or

(4.) Except as last aforesaid, disturb or injure in any manner any pearl oyster bed or pearl oysters or the pearl fishery.

Penalties.

6.—(1.) Whoever does any act in contravention of section 5 shall be punishable—

(*a.*) For the first offence with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months, or with fine which may extend to 200 rupees, or with both; and

(*b.*) For the second and every subsequent offence with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months, or with fine which may extend to 500 rupees, or with both.

(2.) Whoever wilfully does any act in contravention of any rule made under section 4 or any condition of a licence granted under section 3 shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months, or with fine which may extend to 200 rupees, or with both.

Procedure.

7. Any offence under this Regulation committed in the territorial waters of Perim may be tried, punished, and in all respects dealt with, as if it had been committed on the land abutting on the sea coast of the Island of Perim.

Liability of master of ship for offences committed on board.

8. Where any offence under this Regulation has been committed by some person conveyed in a ship or boat, the master or person for the time being in charge of such ship or boat shall be deemed to have committed such offence unless he proves that he used due diligence to enforce the observance of this Regulation and that the offence in question was actually committed by some other person without his connivance, and that the actual offender has been convicted, or that he has taken all practical means in his power to prosecute such offender (if alive) to conviction.

Forfeiture of pearls, &c., by order of convicting Court.

9. On the conviction of any person for an offence punishable under this Regulation, the convicting Court may, in addition to any other penalty prescribed for such offence, order the forfeiture of all pearl and pearl oysters in respect of which such offender is convicted, and of the ship or boat in which such offender was conveyed, and her tackle, apparel, and furniture, and any property on board thereof, and of any implement, apparatus or thing placed or used in contravention of the provisions of this Regulation.

Arrest without warrant.

10. Any police officer, or other person especially empowered by the Resident in this behalf, may arrest without warrant any person committing in his view any offence punishable under this Regulation, or any person reasonably suspected of having been concerned in any such offence who refuses to give his name and residence, or gives a name and residence which there is reason to believe to be false.

Inclosure 28 in No. 134[a].

Government of Bombay to Government of India.

Bombay Castle, July 8, 1907.

I AM directed to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Holland's letter, dated the 18th May, 1907, relative to a proposal to open a pearl fishery within the territorial waters of the Island of Perim.

2. In reply I am to forward herewith, for the information of the Government of India, a copy of a letter, dated the 8th June, 1907, from the Political Resident, Aden, and to state, with reference to paragraph 5 of Mr. Holland's letter, that owing to the proximity of the Turkish coast and the narrowness of the Strait separating the Island of Perim from the mainland, there is not a clear marine league of undisputed territorial water on the east side of the island. The Governor in Council is therefore of opinion

that the boundary-line separating British territorial waters from those of Turkey should run down the middle of the Strait. Section 2 (2) of the draft Regulation which accompanied Mr. Holland's letter under reference will require modification.

3. I am to state that, subject to this proposed modification, the Governor in Council considers the draft Regulation submitted by the Government of India suitable to the requirements of the case.

Inclosure 29 in No. 134°.

Lieutenant-Colonel Legh to Government of Bombay.

Aden, June 8, 1907.

WITH reference to the correspondence forwarded to me for remarks with your indorsement dated the 27th March, 1907, relative to the proposal to open a pearl fishery within the territorial waters of the Island of Perim, I have the honour to state that the draft Regulation revised by the Government of India is, in my opinion, suited to the requirements of the case.

2. With regard, however, to the definition of the territorial waters of Perim contained in section 2 (2) of the Regulation, I have the honour to invite reference to paragraph 5 of this Office letter, dated the 4th June, 1905, and to paragraph 2 (3) of the draft Regulation submitted with that letter, and to state that the proximity of the island to Turkish territory on the Arabian Coast would appear to necessitate some special definition of the boundary-line passing through the centre of the narrow Strait of Babel Mandeb on the lines there suggested.

3. I concur that it is desirable that the form of licence should be adapted to suit the circumstances of the case. And I would suggest that the Legal Remembrancer to Government might be asked to frame the two particular forms of licence which he considers best suited to meet the requirements of the two alternative proposals of (*a*) licensing a Company or person, (*b*) licensing a large number of different persons. It would at the same time seem desirable that the Rules framed under section 5 (2) (*b*) and (*c*) of the Regulation should be of a nature to meet the requirements of either alternative.

4. As to the publication of the Rules referred to in clause 4 (3) of the Regulation, I have recently been considering the desirability of the issue of a small local Gazette for the publication of these and other Rules affecting the public such as those referred to in this Office letter, dated the 1st June, 1907, to the General Department. But in order to avoid the trouble and expense of the extra establishment which would be necessary for the purpose, I am inclined to the opinion that it would be preferable to arrange for the vernacular and English versions of all such publications in the Government "Gazette," and to then inform the public that a subscription to that "Gazette" will give them all the information they require.

5. I have no objection to urge to clause 8 of the Regulation which reproduces the provision of section 20 of "The Sea Fisheries Act, 1883."